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LET'S READ AND DISCUSS

Reader

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Данное пособие может быть использовано как для индивидуального чтения, так и в качестве учебного пособия для развития навыков различных видов чтения, а также для организации самостоятельной работы студентов. Пособие состоит из девяти разделов. Каждый раздел снабжен биографией автора, комментариями, упражнениями, направленными на развитие навыков чтения, говорения и письма, а также на активизацию лексики и контроль понимания текста. Разделы построены однотипно, что не исключает использования отдельных разовых заданий в рамках общей методической концепции. Задания носят оригинальный характер и разработаны авторами-составителями самостоятельно на аутентичном языковом материале. Данное пособие предназначено для студентов Европейского гуманитарного университета, уровень владения английским языком B1 – B2, а также для широкого круга изучающих английский язык.

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Коллектив авторов выражает искреннюю признательность Конаковой Татьяне, старшему преподавателю кафедры «современных иностранных языков» Белорусского национального технического университета, за помощь в разработке пособия.



Christopher Morley (5 May 1890–28 March 1957) was an American journalist, novelist, and poet.

He was born in Haverford, Pennsylvania. Morley studied at Haverford College, where he obtained a BA in 1910. He was a Rhodes Scholar at New College, Oxford from 1910 to 1913. Morley got his start as a newspaper reporter and then columnist for various publications in Philadelphia and later New York City.

He was one of the founders and long-time staff member of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. A highly gregarious man, he was the mainstay of what he dubbed the «Three Hours for Lunch Club». Out of enthusiasm for the Sherlock Holmes stories, he became the founder of the Baker Street Irregulars and wrote the introduction to the standard omnibus edition of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*. In 1936 he was appointed to revise and enlarge *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (1937, 1948).

Author of more than 50 books of poetry and novels, Morley is probably best known as the author of *Kitty Foyle* (1939), which was made into an Academy Award-winning movie. Other well known works include *Thunder on the Left* (1925), and *The Haunted Bookshop* (1919) and *Parnassus on Wheels* (1917), his two semi-biographical novels of a fictional bookseller.

In later years he lived in Nassau County, Long Island, commuting to the city on the Long Island Rail Road, about which he wrote affectionately. In 1961, a 98-acre park was named in his honor in Nassau County. This park preserves his studio, the «Knothole», as a point of interest, his furniture and bookcases available to the historically-interested public.

Quotations by Christopher Morley:

- "Printer's ink has been running a race against gunpowder these many, many years. Ink is handicapped, in a way, because you can blow up a man with gunpowder in half a second, while it may take twenty years to blow him up with a book. But the gunpowder destroys itself along with its victim, while a book can keep on exploding for centuries."
- "Read, every day, something no one else is reading. Think, every day, something no one else is thinking. Do, every day, something no one else would be silly enough to do. It is bad for the mind to continually be part of unanimity."

- "A man who has never made a woman angry is a failure in life."
- "No man is lonely while eating spaghetti — it requires too much attention."

Read the title. What sort of story do you think this is going to be?

From: **Thursday Evening**

Laura: Well, if you think I'm going to keep a lot of half-eaten salad your mother picked over-
Gordon (seizes garbage pail, lifts it up to the sink and begins to explore its contents. His fuse also is rapidly shortening): My Lord, it's no wonder we never have any money to spend if we chuck half of it away in waste. *(Picking out various selections.)* Waste! Look at that piece of cheese, and those potatoes. You could take those things, and some of this meat, and make a nice economical hash for lunch-
Laura: It's a wonder you wouldn't get a job as a scavenger, I never heard of a husband like you, rummaging through the garbage pail.
Gordon (blows up): Do you know what the one unforgivable sin is? It's waste! It makes me wild to think of working and working like a dog, and half of what I earn just thrown away. Look at this, just look at it! *(Displays a grisly object.)* There's enough meat on that bone to make soup. Oh, ye gods, about half a dozen slices of bread. What's the matter with them, I'd like to know.
Laura: I think it's the most disgusting thing I ever heard of. To go picking over the garbage pail like that. You attend to your affairs and I'll attend to mine.
Gordon: I guess throwing away good, hard-earned money is my affair, isn't it?
Laura: You're always quick enough, to find fault. You don't seem to know when you're lucky. You come back at night and find your home well cared for and me slaving over a hot dinner, and do you ever say a word of thanks? No, all you can think of is finding fault. I can't imagine how you were brought up. Your mother-
Gordon: Just leave my mother out of it. I guess she didn't spoil me the way yours did you. Of course, I wasn't an only daughter-
Laura: I wish you had been. Then I wouldn't have married you.
Gordon: I suppose you think that if you'd married Jack Davis or some other of those jokers you'd never have had to see the inside of a kitchen -
Laura: If Junior grows up with your disposition, all I can say is I hope

he'll never get married.
Gordon: If he gets married, I hope it'll be to some girl who understands something about economy -
Laura: If he gets married, I hope he'll be man enough not to be always finding fault-
Gordon: Well, he won't get married! I'll put him wise to what marriage means, fussing like this all the time-
Laura: Yes, he will get married. He shall get married!
Gordon: Oh, this is too absurd -
Laura: He shall get married, just to be a humiliating example to his father. I'll bring him up the way a husband ought to be.
Gordon: In handcuffs, I suppose -
Laura: And his wife won't have to sit and listen to perpetual criticism from his mother-
Gordon: If you're so down on mothers-in-law, it's queer you're anxious to be one yourself. The expectant mother-in-law!
Laura: All right, be vulgar, I dare say you can't help it.
Gordon: Great Scott, what did you think marriage was like, anyway? Did you expect to go through life having everything done for you, without a little hard work to make it interesting?
Laura: Is it necessary to shout?
Gordon: Now let me tell you something. Let's see if you can ratify it from your extensive, observation of life. Is there anything in the world so cruel as bringing up a girl in absolute ignorance of housework? Marriage ought not to be performed before an altar, but before a kitchen sink.
Laura (furiously): I ought to have known that oil and water won't mix. I ought to have known that a vulgar, selfish, conceited man couldn't make a girl happy who was brought up in a refined family. You're too common, too ordinary, to know when you're lucky. You get a charming, aristocratic wife and expect her to grub along like a washerwoman. You try to crush all the life and spirit out of her. You ought to have married an icebox - that's the only thing in this house you're really attentive to.
Gordon: Now listen.
Laura (will not be checked): Talk about being spoiled- why, your mother babies you so, you think you're the only man on earth. *(Sarcastically)* Her poor, overworked boy, who tries so hard and gets all fagged out in the office and struggles so nobly to support his family! I wonder how you'd like to run this house and bear a child and take care of it and cook a big dinner and be sneered at and never a word

of praise. All you can think of is picking over the garbage pail and finding fault-

Gordon (like a fool): I didn't find fault! I found some good food being wasted.

Laura: All right, if you love the garbage pail better than you do your wife, you can live with it. *(Flings her dish towel on the floor and exits into dining-room.)*

Gordon stands irresolutely at the sink, and makes a few gloomy motions among the unfinished dishes. He glares at the garbage can. Then he carefully gathers those portions of food that he has chosen as being still usable, then puts them on a plate and, after some hesitation, puts the plate in the icebox. He is about to do some other things but then a sudden fit of anger seizes him, he tears off apron, throws it on the floor, and goes out, slamming door.

After a brief pause, Mrs. Sheffield and later Mrs. Johns enter the kitchen. They begin putting things to lights. They work like automatons. For perhaps two minutes not a word is said, and the two seem, by searching side glances, to be probing each other's mood.)

Mrs. Johns: If it wasn't so tragic I'd laugh. *(A pause, during which they work busily.)*

Mrs. Sheffield: If it wasn't so comic I'd cry. *(Another pause.)* I guess it's my fault. Poor Laura, I'm afraid I have spoiled her.

Mrs. Johns: My fault, I think. Two mothers-in-law at once is too much for any young couple. I didn't know you were here, or I wouldn't have come.

Mrs. Sheffield: Laura is so dreadfully sensitive, poor child -

Mrs. Johns: Gordon works so hard at the office. You know he's trying to get promoted to the sales department, and I suppose it tells on his nerves -

Mrs. Sheffield: If Laura could afford to have a nurse to help her with the baby, she wouldn't get so exhausted

Mrs. Johns: Gordon says he wants to take out some more insurance, that's why he worries so about economy. It isn't for himself; he's really very unselfish -

Mrs. Sheffield (a little tartly): Still, I do think that sometimes - *(They pause and look at each other quickly.)* My gracious, we'll be at it ourselves if we don't look out! *(She goes to the clothes-horse and rearranges the garments on it. She holds up a Lilliputian shirt, and they both smile.)*

Mrs. Johns: That darling baby! I hope he won't have poor Gordon's

quick temper. It runs in the Johns family, I'm afraid. You know Gordon's father used to say that Adam and Eve didn't know when they were well off. He said that was why they called it the Garden of Eden.
Mrs. Sheffield: Why?
Mrs. Johns: Because there was no mother-in-law there.
Mrs. Sheffield: Poor children, they have such a lot to learn! I really feel ashamed, Mrs. Johns, because Laura is an undisciplined little thing, and I'm afraid I've always petted her too much. She had such a lot of attention before she met Gordon, and was made so much of, it gave her wrong ideas.
Mrs. Johns: I wish Gordon was a little younger; I'd like to turn him up and spank him. He's dreadfully stubborn and tactless -
Mrs. Sheffield: But I'm afraid I did make a mistake.
Laura was having such a good time as a girl, I was always afraid she'd have a hard awakening when she married. But Mr. Sheffield had a good deal of money at that time, and he used to say, "She's only young once. Let her enjoy herself"
Mrs. Johns: My husband was shortsighted, too. He had had to skimp so that he brought up Gordon to have a terror of wasting a nickel.
Mrs. Sheffield: Very sensible. I wish Mr. Sheffield had had a little more of that terror. I shall have to tell him what his policy has resulted in. But really, you know, when I heard them at it, I could hardly help admiring them. It brings back old times!
Mrs. Johns: So it does! *(A pause.)* But we can't let them go on like this. A little vigorous quarrelling is good for everybody. It's a kind of spiritual laxative. But they carry it too far.
Mrs. Sheffield: They're awfully ingenious. They were even bickering about Junior's future mother-in-law. I suppose she's still in school, whoever she may be!
Mrs. Johns: Being a mother-in-law is almost as painful as being a mother.
Mrs. Sheffield: I think every marriage ought to be preceded by a treaty of peace between the two mothers. If they understand each other, everything will work out all right.
Mrs. Johns: You're right. When each one takes sides with her own child, it's fatal.
Mrs. Sheffield (lowering her voice): Look here, I think I know how we can make them ashamed of themselves. Where are they now?
Mrs. Johns (goes cautiously to dining-room door, and peeps through): Laura is lying on the couch in the living-room. I think she's crying - her face is buried in the cushions.

Mrs. Sheffield: Splendid. That means she's listening with all her ears. *(Tiptoes to window.)* I can't see Gordon, but I think he's walking around the garden -

Mrs. Johns (quietly): If we were to talk a little louder he'd sit on the back steps to hear it-

Mrs. Sheffield: Exactly. Now listen! *(They put their heads together and whisper; the audience does not hear what is said.)*

Mrs. Johns: Fine! Oh, that's tine! *(Mrs. Sheffield whispers again, inaudibly.)* But wait a moment. Don't you think it would be better if I praise Laura and you praise Gordon? They won't expect that, and it might shame them -

Mrs. Sheffield: No, no! Don't you see – *(Whispers again, inaudibly.)*

Mrs. Johns: You're right. Cunning as serpents and harmless as doves - *(They carefully set both doors ajar.)*

Mrs. Sheffield: I only hope we won't wake the baby-

(They return to the task of cleaning up, and talk very loudly, in pretended quarrel. Then each one begins praising her own child and criticizing the other. Their last words are):

Mrs. Sheffield: Yes, as Laura's mother I can't let her go on like this. A husband, a home, and a baby – it's enough to ruin any woman.

Mrs. Johns: It's only fair to both sides to end it all. I never heard of such brutal hardships. Gordon can't fight against these things any longer. Throwing away a soupbone and three slices of bread! I wonder he doesn't go mad.

Mrs. Sheffield: We've saved them just in time.

(They look at each other knowingly, with the air of those who have done a sound bit of work. Then they stealthily open the door at the rear, and exeunt up the back stairs.

There is a brief pause; then the dining-room door opens like an explosion, and Laura bursts in. She stands for a moment, wild-eyed, stamps her foot in a passion. Then she seizes one of the baby shirts from the rack, and drops into the chair by the table, crying. She buries her head in her arms, concealing the shirt. Enters Gordon, from porch. He stands uncertainly, evidently feeling like a fool.)

Gordon: I'm sorry, I – I left my pipe in here. *(Finds it by the sink.)*

Laura (her face still hidden): Oh, Gordie, was it all a mistake?

Gordon (troubled, pats her shoulder tentatively): Now listen, Creature, don't. You'll make yourself sick.

Laura: I never thought I'd hear such things – from my own mother.

Gordon: I never heard such rot. They must be mad, both of them.

Laura: Then you were listening, too -

Gordon: Yes. Why, they're deliberately trying to set us against each other.
Laura: They wouldn't have dared speak like that if they had known we could hear. Gordon, I don't think it's legal -
Gordon: I'm afraid the law doesn't give one much protection against one's mothers.
Laura (miserably): I guess she's right. I am spoiled, and I am silly, and I am extravagant-
Gordon: Don't be silly, darling. That's crazy stuff. I'm not overworked, and even if I were I'd love it, for you-
Laura: I don't want a nurse for Junior. I wouldn't have one in the house. *(Sits up, disheveled, and displays the small shirt she has been clutching.)* Gordon, I'm not an amateur! I love that baby and I am scientific. I keep a chart of his weight every week.
Gordon: Yes, I know, ducky, Gordon understands.
Laura: Nobody can take away my darling baby-
Gordon: It was my fault, dear, I am obstinate and disagreeable -
Laura: Gordon, you mustn't work too hard. You know you're all I have *(a sob)* since Mother's gone back on me.
Gordon (patting her): I think it's frightful, the things they said. What are they trying to do, break up a happy home?
Laura: We are happy, aren't we?
Gordon: Well, I should say so. Did you ever hear me complain? *(Takes her in his arms.)*
Laura: No, Gordie. It was cruel of them to try to make trouble between us; but, perhaps, some of the things they said -
Gordon: Were true?
Laura: Well, not exactly true, dear, but - interesting! Your mother is right, you do have a hard time, and I'll try-
Gordon (stops her): No, your mother is right. I've been a brute-
Laura: I'm lucky to have such a husband - *(They are silent a moment.)* You know, Gordie, we mustn't let them know we heard them.
Gordon: No, I suppose not. But it's hard to forgive that sort of talk.
Laura: Even if they did say atrocious things, I think they really love us.
Gordon: We'll be a bit cold and standoffish until things blow over.
Laura (complacently): If I'm ever a mother-in-law, I shall try to be very understanding -
Gordon: Yes, Creature. Do you remember why I call you Creature?
Laura: Do I not?
Gordon: There was an adjective omitted, you remember.

Laura: Oh, Gordie, that's one of the troubles of married life. So many of the nice adjectives seem to get omitted.
Gordon: Motto for married men: Don't run short of adjectives! You remember what the adjective was?
Laura: Tell me.
Gordon: Adorable. It was an abbreviation for Adorable Creature. *(Holds her. They are both perfectly happy.)* I love our little Thursday evenings.
Laura (partly breaks from his embrace): Sssh! *(Listens.)* Was that the baby?

Glossary

to be down on – (informal) to dislike or not approve of sb. or sth.
to bicker - to argue about unimportant matters
conceited – having too much pride in yourself and what you do
disposition – the natural qualities of a person's character
fagged out - tired and bored
to grub along - to work hard
to humiliate - to make someone feel ashamed or lose their respect for themselves
ingenious - very clever and skilful
obstinate - unreasonably determined, especially to act in a particular way and not to change at all, despite argument or persuasion
perpetual – frequently repeated, in a way that is annoying
to pet - If you pet an animal, child, etc., you touch them gently and affectionately with your hands
refined – having the sort of manners that are considered typical of a high social class
to rummage through – to move things around carelessly while searching for sth.
to skimp - to not spend enough time or money on something, or to not use enough of something to do a job or activity properly
stubborn - describes someone who is determined to do what they want and refuses to do anything else
vigorous - very forceful or energetic

Language focus

1. Match the words with their synonyms. Consult a dictionary if you need.

a. to humiliate	1. personality
b. conceited	2. to argue
c. to grub	3. to scrimp
d. disposition	4. to disgrace
e. perpetual	5. vain
f. to skimp	6. to cherish
g. to bicker	7. to toil
h. to pet	8. permanent

2. Translate into Russian.

– *You're always quick enough to find fault. You don't seem to know when you're lucky. You come back at night and find your home well cared for and me slaving over a hot dinner, and do you ever say a word of thanks? No, all you can think of is finding fault. I can't imagine how you were brought up. Your mother.*

– Just leave my mother out of it. I guess she didn't spoil me the way yours did you. Of course, I wasn't an only daughter.

– *I ought to have known that a vulgar, selfish, conceited man couldn't make a girl happy who was brought up in a refined family. You're too common, too ordinary, to know when you're lucky. You get a charming, aristocratic wife and expect her to grub along like a washer-woman. You try to crush all the life and spirit out of her. You ought to have married an icebox – that's the only thing in this house you're really attentive to.*

– I think every marriage ought to be preceded by a treaty of peace between the two mothers. If they understand each other, everything will work out all right.

– *You're right. When each one takes sides with her own child, it's fatal.*

3. Which adjectives describe Mrs. Johns and Mrs. Sheffield?

cunning silly ingenious stubborn indifferent thrifty
vigorous spoiled shortsighted disagreeable loving wise
conceited vulgar quick-tempered experienced selfish

4. Find seven words from the story. The words may appear in any direction. Make up sentences with the words.

v	i	g	o	r	o	u	s	a	h
w	n	e	r	t	y	u	i	o	u
p	g	a	s	p	d	f	g	h	m
p	e	r	p	e	t	u	a	l	i
j	n	k	l	t	z	x	c	v	l
b	i	c	k	e	r	b	n	m	i
c	o	n	c	e	i	t	e	d	a
w	u	e	r	t	y	s	a	u	t
i	s	o	p	a	s	d	f	g	e

Reading Comprehension

1. Which character speaks the following lines and what do these lines tell us about their character?

– Marriage ought not to be performed before an altar, but before a kitchen sink.
– Motto for married men: Don't run short of adjectives!
– I ought to have known that oil and water won't mix.
– If it wasn't so tragic I'd laugh.
– Did you expect to go through life having everything done for you, without a little hard work to make it interesting?
– You're always quick enough to find faults.
– If it wasn't so comic I'd cry.
– If Junior grows up with your disposition, all I can say is I hope he'll never get married.
– A little vigorous quarrelling is good for everybody. It's a kind of spiritual laxative.
– That darling baby! I hope he won't have poor Gordon's quick temper.

2. Look at the words in italics. Who is *she, he, I, they?*

- ***She*** is an undisciplined little thing, ***I***'m afraid ***I***'*ve* always petted her too much.

- ***I*** am spoiled, and ***I*** am silly, and ***I*** am extravagant.
- ***He***'s dreadfully stubborn and tactless.
- ***He*** had a good deal of money at that time, and ***he*** used to say, "She's only young once. Let her enjoy herself!"
- ***I*** am obstinate and disagreeable.
- If ***they*** understand each other, everything will work out all right.

3. Explain what is meant by:

1) If you'd married Jack Davis or some other of those jokers you'd never have had to see the inside of a kitchen. 2) He shall get married, just to be a humiliating example to his father. 3) I ought to have known that oil and water won't mix. 4) He wants to take out some more insurance... 5) It runs in the Johns family. 6) I was always afraid she'd have a hard awakening when she married. 7) My husband was shortsighted, too. He had had to skimp...

Talking points

- Do you think a wife should be thrifty? To what extend?
- What are the difficulties in the upbringing of an only child?
- Should a husband and a wife have similar personalities?
- What is the recipe for a happy marriage?
- How do you understand the motto for married men: Don't run short of adjectives!
- What happens to Laura and Gordon after the end of the story?
- Do you think "Thursday Evening" is a good title? Make up an alternative.
- Imagine you are making a film of "Thursday Evening". Which actors would you choose to play Laura, Gordon, Mrs. Johns, and Mrs. Sheffield? Would you make any changes to the story?

Dramatization

Make up and act out dialogues between:

- Laura and her best friend discussing the event of Thursday evening.
- Mrs. Johns (Mrs. Sheffield) speaking with her husband about the quarrel.

Writing

Write a review of this play.



Somerset Maugham (1874-1965).
British novelist, playwright, short-story writer, highest paid author in the world in the 1930s. Despite his popularity, Maugham did not gain serious recognition. This was expressed in his autobiography *The Summing Up* (1938), that he stood 'in the very first row of the second-raters'.
W. Somerset Maugham was born in Paris as the sixth and youngest son of the solicitor to the British embassy. He learned French as his native tongue. At the age of 10 Maugham was orphaned and sent to England to live with his uncle, the vicar of Whitstable. Educated at King's School, Canterbury, and Heidelberg University, Maugham then studied six years medicine in London. He qualified in 1897 as doctor from St. Thomas' medical school but abandoned medicine after the success of his first novels and plays.
Maugham lived in Paris for ten years as a struggling young author. In 1897 appeared his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth*, which drew on his experiences of attending women in childbirth. His first play, *A Man of Honour*, was produced in 1903. Four of his plays ran simultaneously in London in 1904. Maugham's breakthrough novel was the semi-autobiographical *Of Human Bondage* (1915), which is usually considered his outstanding achievement.
Disguising as a reporter, Maugham worked for British Intelligence in Russia during the Russian Revolution in 1917, but his stuttering and poor health hindered his career in this field. He then set off with a friend on a series of travels to eastern Asia, the Pacific Islands, and Mexico. His most famous story, which became the play *Rain* and was made into several movies, was inspired by a missionary and prostitute among his fellow passengers on a trip to Pago Pago. In the 1928 he settled in Cape Ferrat in France. His plays, among them *The Circle* (1921), a satire of social life, *Our Betters* (1923), about Americans in Europe, and *The Constant Wife* (1927), about a wife who takes revenge on her unfaithful husband, were performed in Europe and in the United States. Maugham's famous novel *The Moon and the Sixpence* (1919) was the story of Charles Strickland (or actually Paul Gauguin), an artist, whose rejection of Western civilization led to his departure for Tahiti.
Maugham believed that there is a true harmony in the contradictions of mankind and that the normal is in reality the abnormal. "The ordinary is the writer's richest field", he stated in *The Summing Up* (1938).
Maugham died in Nice on December 16, 1965. It is said that as he lay

dying he asked Sir Alfred Ayer visit him and reassure him that there was no life after death.
A number of Maugham's short stories have been filmed.

The Happy Man

It is a dangerous thing to order the lives of others and I have often wondered at the self-confidence of politicians, reformers and such-like who are prepared to force, upon their fellows measures that must alter their manners, habits, and points of view. I have always hesitated to give advice, for how can one advise another how to act unless one knows that other as well as one knows oneself? Heaven knows, I know little enough of myself: I know nothing of others. We can only guess at the thoughts and emotions of our neighbours. Each one of us is a prisoner in a solitary tower and he communicates with the other prisoners, who form mankind, by conventional signs that have not quite the same meaning for them as for himself. And life, unfortunately, is something that you can lead but once; mistakes are often irreparable, and who am I that I should tell this one and that how he should lead it? Life is a difficult business and I have found it hard enough to make my own a complete and rounded thing; I have not been tempted to teach my neighbour what he should do with his. But there are men who flounder at the journey's start, the way before them is confused and hazardous, and on occasion, however unwillingly, I have been forced to point the finger of fate. Sometimes men have said to me, what shall I do with my life? and I have seen myself for a moment wrapped in the dark cloak of Destiny.

Once I know that I advised well.

I was a young man and I lived in a modest apartment in London near Victoria Station. Late one afternoon, when I was beginning to think that I had worked enough for that day, I heard a ring at the bell. I opened the door to a total stranger. He asked me my name; I told him. He asked if he might come in.

'Certainly.'

I led him into my sitting-room and begged him to sit down. He seemed a trifle embarrassed. I offered him a cigarette and he had some difficulty in lighting it without letting go of his hat. When he had satisfactorily achieved this feat I asked him if I should not put it on a chair for him. He quickly did this and while doing it dropped his umbrella.

'I hope you don't mind my coming to see you like this,' he said. 'My name is Stephens and I am a doctor. You're in the medical, I be-

lieve?'

'Yes, but I don't practise!

'No, I know. I've just read a book of yours about Spain and I wanted to ask you about it.'

'It's not a very good book, I'm afraid.'

'The fact remains that you know something about Spain and there's no one else I know who does. And I thought perhaps you wouldn't mind giving me some information!

'I shall be very glad.'

He was silent for a moment. He reached out for his hat and holding it in one hand absentmindedly stroked it with the other. I surmised that it gave him confidence.

'I hope you won't think it very odd for a perfect stranger to talk to you like this.' He gave an apologetic laugh. 'I'm not going to tell you the story of my life.'

When people say this to me I always know that it is precisely what they are going to do. I do not mind. In fact I rather like it

'I was brought up by two old aunts. I've never been anywhere. I've never done anything. I've been married for six years. I have no children. I'm a medical officer at the Camberwell Infirmary. I can't stick it any more.'

There was something very striking in the short, sharp sentences he used. They had a forcible ring. I had not given him more than a cursory glance, but now I looked at him with curiosity. He was a little man, thick-set and stout, of thirty perhaps, with a round red face from which shone small, dark and very bright eyes. His black hair was cropped close to a bullet-shaped head. He was dressed in a blue suit a good deal the worse for wear. It was baggy at the knees and the pockets bulged untidily.

'You know what the duties are of a medical officer in an infirmary. One day is pretty much like another. And that's all I've got to look forward to for the rest of my life. Do you think it's worth it?'

'It's a means of livelihood,' I answered.

`Yes, I know. The money's pretty good'

'I don't exactly know why you've come to me.'

'Well, I wanted to know whether you thought there would be any chance for an

English doctor in Spain?'

'Why Spain?'

'I don't know, I just have a fancy for it'

'It's not like Carmen, you know.'

'But there's sunshine there, and there's good wine, and there's colour, and there's air you can breathe. Let me say what I have to say straight out. I heard by accident that there was no English doctor in Seville. Do you think I could earn a living there? Is it madness to give up a good safe job for an uncertainty?'

'What does your wife think about it?'

'She's willing.'

'It's a great risk.'

'I know. But if you say take it, I will: if you say stay where you are, I'll stay.'

He was looking at me intently with those bright dark eyes of his and I knew that he meant what he said. I reflected for a moment.

'Your whole future is concerned: you must decide for yourself. But this I can tell you: if you don't want money but are content to earn just enough to keep body and soul together, then go. For you will lead a wonderful life.'

He left me, I thought about him for a day or two, and then forgot. The episode passed completely from my memory.

Many years later, fifteen at least, I happened to be in Seville and having some trifling indisposition asked the hotel porter whether there was an English doctor in the town. He said there was and gave me the address. I took a cab and as I drove up to the house a little fat man came out of it. He hesitated when he caught sight of me.

'Have you come to see me?' he said. 'I'm the English doctor.'

I explained my errand and he asked me to come in. He lived. in an ordinary Spanish house, with a patio, and his consulting room which led out of it was littered with papers, books, medical appliances, and lumber. The sight of it would have startled a squeamish patient. We did our business and then I asked the doctor what his fee was. He shook his head and smiled.

'There's no fee.'

'Why on earth not?'

'Don't you remember me? Why, I'm here because of something you said to me. You changed my whole life for me. I'm Stephens.'

I had not the least notion what he was talking about. He reminded me of our interview, he repeated to me what we had said, and gradually, out of the night, a dim recollection of the incident came back to me.

'I was wondering if I'd ever see you again,' he said, 'I was wondering if ever I'd have a chance of thanking you for all you've done for me.'

'It's been a success then?'

I looked at him. He was very fat now and bald, but his eyes twinkled gaily and his fleshy, red face bore an expression of perfect good-humour. The clothes he wore, terribly shabby they were, had been made obviously by a Spanish tailor and his hat was the wide-brimmed sombrero of the Spaniard. He looked to me as though he knew a good bottle of wine when he saw it. He had a dissipated, though entirely sympathetic, appearance. You might have hesitated to let him remove your appendix, but you could not have imagined a more delightful creature to drink a glass of wine with

'Surely you were married?' I said.

`Yes. My wife didn't like Spain, she went back to Camberwell, she was more at home there.'

'Oh, I'm sorry for that'

His black eyes flashed a bacchanalian smile. He really had somewhat the look of a young Silenus.

'Life is full of compensations,' he murmured.

The words were hardly out of his mouth when a Spanish woman, no longer in her first youth, but still boldly and voluptuously beautiful, appeared at the door. She spoke to him in Spanish, and I could not fail to perceive that she was the mistress of the house.

As he stood at the door to let me out he said to me:

'You told me when last I saw you that if I came here I should earn just enough money to keep body and soul together, but that I should lead a wonderful life. Well, I want to tell you that you were right. Poor I have been and poor I shall always be, but by heaven I've enjoyed myself. I wouldn't exchange the life I've had with that of any king in the world.'

Glossary

self-confidence, n – the belief that you are able to do things well
solitary, adj – tending to spend a lot of time alone
rounded, adj – combining different aspects to produce a result that is complete or well developed
flounder, v – 1. to experience difficulties and be likely to fail
2. to feel confused and not know what to say or do next
hazardous, adj – dangerous, especially to people's health or safety
wrap,v – to cover something by putting smth such as paper or cloth round it
cloak, n – a long thick loose coat without sleeves, that fastens around your neck

stroke, v – to gently move your hand over skin, hair or fur
surmise, v – to guess that something is true
infirmary, n – a hospital
forcible, adj – involving the use of force
cursory, adj- quick and not thorough
thickset, adj – someone who is thickset has a wide strong body
stout, adj – 1. slightly fat
2. strong and thick
crop, v – to cut someone's hair very short
baggy, adj – baggy clothes are very loose on your body
indisposition, n – an illness, especially one that is not very serious
patio, n – a flat area covered with stone, brick, etc. at the back of a house, where people can sit outside
lumber, n – objects that are being stored because they are not being used
squeamish, adj – easily shocked or upset by something unpleasant
shabby, adj – old and in bad condition
dissipated, adj – spending too much time and money on physical pleasures that are not good for your health
bacchanalian, adj – a bacchanalian party involves noisy and uncontrolled enjoyment
Silenus (Greek Mythology) – a satyr, the foster father of Bacchus
voluptuous, adj – sexually attractive
voluptuously, adv

Language focus

1. Translate the following phrases into Russian:

to order the lives of other people; a prisoner in a solitary tower; mistakes are often irreparable; there are men who flounder at the journey's start; to point the finger of fate; wrapped in the dark cloak of Destiny; I can't stick it any more; I had not given him more than a cursory glance; baggy at the knees; a means of livelihood; to earn just enough to keep body and soul together; having some trifling indisposition; he had a dissipated appearance; she was more at home there; his eyes flashed a bacchanalian smile; still boldly and voluptuously beautiful.

2. Match each word from A with its synonym in B:

A	B
Alter, conventional, embarrass stroke, hazardous, indisposition, glance, crop, surmise, stout, perceive, delightful, trifling, odd	glimpse, dangerous, change, usual, confuse, strange, guess, illness, rub gently, unimportant, bulky, understand, charming, cut short

3. Combine the words into pairs of antonyms:

dangerous same complete absent-minded recollect dim thickset baggy delightful content hesitate different bright unfinished safe dissatisfied slim attentive forget unpleasant tight decide

4. Give the corresponding nouns:

Confident, to hesitate, complete, difficult, to embarrass, modest, to confuse, silent, to decide, absent-minded, mad, certain, to recollect, to reflect, curious, shabby, sympathetic, to appear, to perceive, to fail, to create.

Reading Comprehension

1. Explain the meaning of the following sentences from the story:

1. Each one of us is a prisoner in a solitary tower and he communicates with the other prisoners , who form mankind, by conventional signs.
2. Heaven knows, I know little enough of myself: I know nothing of others.
3. ...and on occasion, however unwillingly, I have been forced to point the finger of fate.
4. And I have seen myself for a moment wrapped in the dark cloak of Destiny.
5. Your whole future is concerned: you must decide for yourself!
6. If you don’t want money but are content to earn just enough to keep body and soul together, then go.
7. He had a dissipated, though entirely sympathetic, appearance.
8. Poor I have been and poor I shall always be, but by heaven I’ve enjoyed myself.

2. Are the following sentences true or false?

1. The author is very positive about teaching other people how to live.
2. Dr. Stephens came to the author to get some information about Spain.
3. He wanted to go to Spain because he didn't earn enough money to keep body and soul together.
4. His wife also wanted to go to Spain.
5. Many years later the author happened to be in Seville and he met Dr.Stephens there.
6. Dr.Stephens was completely dissatisfied with his life in Spain.

3. Answer the following questions:

1. Does the author think that it is very dangerous to teach other people how to live? Why?
2. Who came to visit the author one day? What did the visitor ask for?
3. Why was Mr Stephens dissatisfied with his life? Describe his appearance and behaviour.
4. What advice did the author give him?
5. How did the author happen to know that he advised well? Did he and Mr Stephens meet later?
6. Was Dr. Stephens happy in Spain? Find the lines in the story which show that he was really very happy.

Talking points

1. Do different people often ask you for advice? In what situations? Do you like teaching them how to live? Do you feel that you are responsible for your piece of advice? Has your advice ever changed someone's life?
2. "Where there's a will , there's a way." Do you like this saying? How do you understand it?
Don't you think that the life of Dr.Stephens illustrates this saying very well?
3. In the story Dr.Stephens asks the author:" Is it madness to give up a good safe job for an uncertainty?"
Different people would answer this question in a different way. What about you? How would you answer this question?
4. Comment on the statement "You never know till you have tried."
If a person is dissatisfied with his life , is it better for him to try anything new and to fail than not to try at all? What is your opinion?
5. " Life is full of compensations". This is the statement of Mr Stephens from the story. Do you agree with it? Do you think that life always com-

pensates us for what we lose? Can you give your own examples?
6. People are different and there are no universal recipes for happiness. What do you think about it? What is your recipe for happy life?

Writing

Write a short composition on the topic 'Life is full of compensations'.
Write a short composition on the topic 'What makes me happy'.



O. Henry (1862-1910) was a prolific American short-story writer, a master of surprise endings, who wrote about the life of ordinary people in New York City. William Sydney Porter (O. Henry) was born in Greenboro, North Carolina. His father, Algernon Sidney Porter, was a physician. When William was three, his mother died, and he was raised by his paternal grandmother and aunt. William was an avid reader, but at the age of fifteen he left school, and then worked in a drug store and on a Texas ranch. He moved to Houston, where he had a number of jobs, including that of bank clerk. After moving to Austin, Texas, in 1882, he married.

In 1884 he started a humorous weekly *The Rolling Stone.* When the weekly failed, he joined the *Houston Post* as a reporter and columnist. In 1897 he was convicted of embezzling money, although there has been much debate over his actual guilt. In 1898 he entered a penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio.

While in prison O. Henry started to write short stories to earn money to support his daughter Margaret. His first work, "Whistling Dick's Christmas Stocking" (1899), appeared in *McClure's Magazine*. After doing three years of the five years sentence, Porter emerged from the prison in 1901 and changed his name to O. Henry.

O. Henry moved to New York City in 1902 and from December 1903 to January 1906 he wrote a story a week for the *New York World*, also publishing in other magazines. Henry's first collection, *Cabbages And Kings* appeared in 1904. The second, *The Four Million*, was published two years later and included his well-known stories "The Gift of the Magi" and "The Furnished Room". *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907) included "The Last Leaf". Henry's best known work is perhaps the much anthologized "The Ransom of Red Chief", included in the collection *Whirligigs* (1910). *The Heart Of The West* (1907) presented tales of the Texas range. O. Henry published 10 collections and over 600 short stories during his lifetime.

O. Henry's last years were shadowed by alcoholism, ill health, and financial problems. He married Sara Lindsay Coleman in 1907, but the marriage was not happy, and they separated a year later. O. Henry died of cirrhosis of the liver on June 5, 1910, in New York. Three more collections, *Sixes And Sevens* (1911), *Rolling Stones* (1912) and *Waifs And Strays* (1917), appeared posthumously.

The Gift of the Magi

One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

There was clearly nothing to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it. Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating. While the mistress of the home is gradually subsiding from the first stage to the second, take a look at the home. A furnished flat at $8 per week. It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the mendicancy squad.

In the vestibule below was a letter-box into which no letter would go, and an electric button from which no mortal finger could coax a ring. Also appertaining thereunto was a card bearing the name "Mr. James Dillingham Young." The "Dillingham" had been flung to the breeze during a former period of prosperity when its possessor was being paid $30 per week. Now, when the income was shrunk to $20, though, they were thinking seriously of contracting to a modest and unassuming D. But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called "Jim" and greatly hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good.

Della finished her cry and attended to her cheeks with the powder rag. She stood by the window and looked out dully at a gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard. Tomorrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only $1.87 with which to buy Jim a present. She had been saving every penny she could for months, with this result. Twenty dollars a week doesn't go far. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. They always are. Only $1.87 to buy a present for Jim. Her Jim. Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something nice for him. Something fine and rare and sterling - something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honor of being owned by Jim.

There was a pier-glass between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier-glass in an $8 flat. A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della,

being slender, had mastered the art.

Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the glass. her eyes were shining brilliantly, but her face had lost its color within twenty seconds. Rapidly she pulled down her hair and let it fall to its full length.

Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's. The other was Della's hair. Had the queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.

So now Della's beautiful hair fell about her rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her. And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet.

On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she fluttered out the door and down the stairs to the street.

Where she stopped the sign read: "Mme. Sofronie. Hair Goods of All Kinds." One flight up Della ran, and collected herself, panting. Madame, large, too white, chilly, hardly looked the "Sofronie."

"Will you buy my hair?" asked Della.

"I buy hair," said Madame. "Take your hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it." Down rippled the brown cascade.

"Twenty dollars," said Madame, lifting the mass with a practised hand.

"Give it to me quick," said Della.

Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor. She was ransacking the stores for Jim's present.

She found it at last. It surely had been made for Jim and no one else. There was no other like it in any of the stores, and she had turned all of them inside out. It was a platinum fob chain simple and chaste in design, properly proclaiming its value by substance alone and not by meretricious ornamentation - as all good things should do. It was even worthy of The Watch. As soon as she saw it she knew that it must be Jim's. It was like him. Quietness and value - the description applied to both. Twenty-one dollars they took from her for it, and

she hurried home with the 87 cents. With that chain on his watch Jim might be properly anxious about the time in any company. Grand as the watch was, he sometimes looked at it on the sly on account of the old leather strap that he used in place of a chain.

When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to prudence and reason. She got out her curling irons and lighted the gas and went to work repairing the ravages made by generosity added to love. Which is always a tremendous task, dear friends - a mammoth task.

Within forty minutes her head was covered with tiny, close-lying curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy. She looked at her reflection in the mirror long, carefully, and critically.

"If Jim doesn't kill me," she said to herself, "before he takes a second look at me, he'll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do - oh! what could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?"

At 7 o'clock the coffee was made and the frying-pan was on the back of the stove hot and ready to cook the chops.

Jim was never late. Della doubled the fob chain in her hand and sat on the corner of the table near the door that he always entered. Then she heard his step on the stair away down on the first flight, and she turned white for just a moment. She had a habit for saying little silent prayer about the simplest everyday things, and now she whispered: "Please God, make him think I am still pretty."

The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two - and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves.

Jim stopped inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail. His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

Della wriggled off the table and went for him.

"Jim, darling," she cried, "don't look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. It'll grow out again - you won't mind, will you? I just had to do it. My hair grows awfully fast. Say `Merry Christmas!' Jim, and let's be happy. You don't know what a nice - what a beautiful, nice gift I've got for you."

"You've cut off your hair?" asked Jim, laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor.

"Cut it off and sold it," said Della. "Don't you like me just as well, anyhow? I'm me without my hair, ain't I?"

Jim looked about the room curiously.

"You say your hair is gone?" he said, with an air almost of idiocy.

"You needn't look for it," said Della. "It's sold, I tell you - sold and gone, too. It's Christmas Eve, boy. Be good to me, for it went for you. Maybe the hairs of my head were numbered," she went on with sudden serious sweetness, "but nobody could ever count my love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?"

Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction. Eight dollars a week or a million a year - what is the difference? A mathematician or a wit would give you the wrong answer. The magi brought valuable gifts, but that was not among them. This dark assertion will be illuminated later on.

Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table.

"Don't make any mistake, Dell," he said, "about me. I don't think there's anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first."

White fingers and nimble tore at the string and paper. And then an ecstatic scream of joy; and then, alas! a quick feminine change to hysterical tears and wails, necessitating the immediate employment of all the comforting powers of the lord of the flat.

For there lay The Combs - the set of combs, side and back, that Della had worshipped long in a Broadway window. Beautiful combs, pure tortoise shell, with jewelled rims - just the shade to wear in the beautiful vanished hair. They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession. And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.

But she hugged them to her bosom, and at length she was able to look up with dim eyes and a smile and say: "My hair grows so fast, Jim!"

And them Della leaped up like a little singed cat and cried, "Oh, oh!"

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

"Isn't it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it."

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled.

"Dell," said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em a while. They're too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on."

The magi, as you know, were wise men - wonderfully wise men - who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the magi.

Glossary

Parsimonious, adj - not willing to give or spend money
Mendicancy, n - asking the public for food, money etc.
Mendicant, n - someone who belongs to a religious group that lives by asking the public for food, money etc.
Whirl, v - to spin quickly in circles
Depreciate, v - to become less valuable than before
Falter, v - to stop being effective or making progress
Flutter, v - to move up and down or from side to side with short, quick, light movements, or to make something move in this way
Trip,v - to move with quick light steps
Wriggle, v - to move or make something move by twisting or turning quickly
Adornment,n - a decoration

Language focus

1. Find the sentences in which the words from the glossary are used and translate them into Russian.

2. Match the words with their definitions. Recall the situations in which you come across these words

chronicle	greedily wished for
assertion	the use of good judgment and common sense
agile	most important or frequent
inconsequential	a small entryway within a building
cascade	a record of events
coveted	a statement
predominating	a waterfall
vestibule	able to move quickly and easily
prudence	of no importance

3. Find English equivalents for the following word combinations and phrases

Жизнь состоит из слез, вздохов и улыбок; не выдавить ни звука; пройтись пуховкой по щекам; царица Савская и царь Соломон; рвать бороду от зависти; избитая метафора; скромность и достоинство; исполинский труд; быть обремененным семьей; сеттер,учуявший перепела; выйти из оцепенения; успокоительные средства; младенец в яслях; право обмена в случае непригодности

Reading Comprehension

1. Identify the themes used in the story. Explain how O.Henry uses each theme

- Art
- Beauty
- Bravery
- Death
- Fear
- Family
- Faith
- Freedom
- The Future
- Giving
- Greed
- Justice
- Knowledge
- Law
- Loss
- Love
- Money
- Nature
- Peace
- Poverty
- Pride
- Sacrifice

- Growing Up
- Heroism
- Honesty
- Hope
- Identity
- Religion
- Sacrifice
- Truth
- War
- Wisdom

2. Are the following sentences true or false?

a. Jim and Della lived in their own house in New York.
b. Jim's salary grew to 50$ a week.
c. Della bought Jim a gold wristwatch.
d. Jim didn't like Della's new hairdo.
e. Della was indifferent to Jim's gift.
f. In the end they quarreled and shouted at each other.

3. Which character speaks the following lines and what do these lines tell us about their character. Retell the story by putting the lines in order.

- And now I think we should have our dinner.
- Will you buy my hair?
- I sold the watch to get the money to buy the combs.
- You've cut off your hair?
- Isn't it perfect, Jim?
- What could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?
- Don't you like me now?
- You won't care, will you?

Talking points

1. Look at these English sayings. Are there similar sayings in Russian? Which of the four sayings best describe the main theme of The Gift of the Magi?

- *Love is the greatest gift of all.*
- *Money can't buy you love.*
- A gift must come from the heart.
- Beauty comes from within.

2. Why does O.Henry refer to Jim and Della as "children"? How were they unwise? How were they wise?

3. Who do you think made the greatest sacrifice, Della, by selling her hair or Jim, by selling his watch?

4. Many people think that Christmas has become too commercial and it is easy to forget the true spiritual meaning of a special occasion. Do you agree?

Dramatization

- Plot a new ending for the story.
- Imagine that Della tries to buy back Jim's watch.
- How will she raise the money?
- What will Jim's reaction be?

Writing

Make a list of all the special dates that you celebrate during each year. Pay careful attention to the ones that you or your family celebrate most.

Write a short description of what you do on one of those special occasions. Especially, write about the things you do on those days that are connected to the real meaning of the celebration and why you do them.

Which is the most important day of the year for you?

The Last Leaf

In a little district west of Washington Square the streets have run crazy and broken themselves into small strips called "places." These "places" make strange angles and curves. One Street crosses itself a time or two. An artist once discovered a valuable possibility in this street. Suppose a collector with a bill for paints, paper and canvas should, in traversing this route, suddenly meet himself coming back, without a cent having been paid on account!

So, to quaint old Greenwich Village the art people soon came prowling, hunting for north windows and eighteenth-century gables and Dutch attics and low rents. Then they imported some pewter mugs and a chafing dish or two from Sixth Avenue, and became a "colony."

At the top of a squatty, three-story brick Sue and Johnsy had their studio. "Johnsy" was familiar for Joanna. One was from Maine; the other from California. They had met at the table d'hôte of an Eighth Street "Delmonico's," and found their tastes in art, chicory salad and bishop sleeves so congenial that the joint studio resulted.

That was in May. In November a cold, unseen stranger, whom the doctors called Pneumonia, stalked about the colony, touching one here and there with his icy fingers. Over on the east side this ravager strode boldly, smiting his victims by scores, but his feet trod slowly through the maze of the narrow and moss-grown "places."

Mr. Pneumonia was not what you would call a chivalric old gentleman. A mite of a little woman with blood thinned by California zephyrs was hardly fair game for the red-fisted, short-breathed old duffer. But Johnsy he smote; and she lay, scarcely moving, on her painted iron bedstead, looking through the small Dutch window-panes at the blank side of the next brick house.

One morning the busy doctor invited Sue into the hallway with a shaggy, gray eyebrow.

"She has one chance in – let us say, ten," he said, as he shook down the mercury in his clinical thermometer. " And that chance is for her to want to live. This way people have of lining-u on the side of the undertaker makes the entire pharmacopoeia look silly. Your little lady has made up her mind that she's not going to get well. Has she anything on her mind?"

"She – she wanted to paint the Bay of Naples some day." said Sue.

"Paint? – bosh! Has she anything on her mind worth thinking twice – a man for instance?"

"A man?" said Sue, with a jew's-harp twang in her voice. "Is a man worth – but, no, doctor; there is nothing of the kind."

"Well, it is the weakness, then," said the doctor. "I will do all that science, so far as it may filter through my efforts, can accomplish. But whenever my patient begins to count the carriages in her funeral procession I subtract 50 per cent from the curative power of medicines. If you will get her to ask one question about the new winter styles in cloak sleeves I will promise you a one-in-five chance for her, instead of one in ten."

After the doctor had gone Sue went into the workroom and cried a Japanese napkin to a pulp. Then she swaggered into Johnsy's room with her drawing board, whistling ragtime.

Johnsy lay, scarcely making a ripple under the bedclothes, with her face toward the window. Sue stopped whistling, thinking she was asleep.

She arranged her board and began a pen-and-ink drawing to illustrate a magazine story. Young artists must pave their way to Art by drawing pictures for magazine stories that young authors write to pave their way to Literature.

As Sue was sketching a pair of elegant horseshow riding trousers and a monocle of the figure of the hero, an Idaho cowboy, she heard a low sound, several times repeated. She went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting – counting backward.

"Twelve," she said, and little later "eleven"; and then "ten," and "nine"; and then "eight" and "seven", almost together.

Sue look solicitously out of the window. What was there to count? There was only a bare, dreary yard to be seen, and the blank side of the brick house twenty feet away. An old, old ivy vine, gnarled and decayed at the roots, climbed half way up the brick wall. The cold breath of autumn had stricken its leaves from the vine until its skeleton branches clung, almost bare, to the crumbling bricks.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, in almost a whisper. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head ache to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your Sudie."

"Leaves. On the ivy vine. When the last one falls I must go, too. I've known that for three days. Didn't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such nonsense," complained Sue, with mag-

nificent scorn. “What have old ivy leaves to do with your getting well? And you used to love that vine so, you naughty girl. Don’t be a goosey. Why, the doctor told me this morning that your chances for getting well real soon were - let’s see exactly what he said - he said the chances were ten to one! Why, that’s almost as good a chance as we have in New York when we ride on the street cars or walk past a new building. Try to take some broth now, and let Sudie go back to her drawing, so she can sell the editor man with it, and buy port wine for her sick child, and pork chops for her greedy self.”

“You needn’t get any more wine,” said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed out the window. “There goes another. No, I don’t want any broth. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I’ll go, too.”

“Johnsy, dear,” said Sue, bending over her, “will you promise me to keep your eyes closed, and not look out the window until I am done working? I must hand those drawings in by to-morrow. I need the light, or I would draw the shade down.”

“Couldn’t you draw in the other room?” asked Johnsy, coldly. “I’d rather be here by you,” said Sue. “Beside, I don’t want you to keep looking at those silly ivy leaves.”

“Tell me as soon as you have finished,” said Johnsy, closing her eyes, and lying white and still as fallen statue, “because I want to see the last one fall. I’m tired of waiting. I’m tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on everything, and go sailing down, down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves.”

“Try to sleep,” said Sue. “I must call Behrman up to be my model for the old hermit miner. I’ll not be gone a minute. Don’t try to move ‘til I come back.”

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was past sixty and had a Michael Angelo’s Moses beard curling down from the head of a satyr along with the body of an imp. Behrman was a failure in art. Forty years he had wielded the brush without getting near enough to touch the hem of his Mistress’s robe. He had been always about to paint a masterpiece, but had never yet begun it. For several years he had painted nothing except now and then a daub in the line of commerce or advertising. He earned a little by serving as a model to those young artists in the colony who could not pay the price of a professional. He drank gin to excess, and still talked of his coming masterpiece. For the rest he was a fierce little old man, who scoffed terribly at softness in any one, and who regarded himself as especial mastiff-in-waiting to protect the two

young artists in the studio above.

Sue found Behrman smelling strongly of juniper berries in his dimly lighted den below. In one corner was a blank canvas on an easel that had been waiting there for twenty-five years to receive the first line of the masterpiece. She told him of Johnsy's fancy, and how she feared she would, indeed, light and fragile as a leaf herself, float away, when her slight hold upon the world grew weaker.

Old Behrman, with his red eyes plainly streaming, shouted his contempt and derision for such idiotic imaginings.

"Vass!" he cried. "Is dere people in de world mit der foolishness to die because leafs dey drop off from a confounded vine? I haf not heard of such a thing. No, I will not bose as a model for your fool hermit-dunderhead. Vy do you allow dot silly pusiness to come in der brain of her? Ach, dot poor leetle Miss Yohnsy."

"She is very ill and weak," said Sue, "and the fever has left her mind morbid and full of strange fancies. Very well, Mr. Behrman, if you do not care to pose for me, you needn't. But I think you are a horrid old – old flibbertigibbet."

"You are just like a woman!" yelled Behrman. "Who said I will not bose? Go on. I come mit you. For half an hour I haf peen trying to say dot I am ready to bose. Gott! dis is not any blace in which one so goot as Miss Yohnsy shall lie sick. Some day I vill baint a masterpiece, and ve shall all go away. Gott! yes."

Johnsy was sleeping when they went upstairs. Sue pulled the shade down to the window-sill, and motioned Behrman into the other room. In there they peered out the window fearfully at the ivy vine. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A persistent, cold rain was falling, mingled with snow. Behrman, in his old blue shirt, took his seat as the hermit miner on an upturned kettle for a rock.

When Sue awoke from an hour's sleep the next morning she found Johnsy with dull, wide-open eyes staring at the drawn green shade.

"Pull it up; I want to see," she ordered, in a whisper.

Wearily Sue obeyed.

But, lo! after the beating rain and fierce gusts of wind that had endured through the livelong night, there yet stood out against the brick wall one ivy leaf. It was the last one on the vine. Still dark green near its stem, with its serrated edges tinted with the yellow of dissolution and decay, it hung bravely from the branch some twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it would surely fall during

the night. I heard the wind. It will fall to-day, and I shall die at the same time."

"Dear, dear!" said Sue, leaning her worn face down to the pillow, "think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do?"

But Johnsy did not answer. The lonesomest thing in all the world is a soul when it is making ready to go on its mysterious, far journey. The fancy seemed to possess her more strongly as one by one the ties that bound her to friendship and to earth were loosed. The day wore away, and even through the twilight they could see the lone ivy leaf clinging to its stem against the wall. And then, with the coming of the night the north wind was again loosed, while the rain still beat against the windows and pattered down from the low Dutch eaves.

When it was light enough Johnsy, the merciless, commanded that the shade be raised. The ivy leaf was still there.

Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was stirring her chicken broth over the gas stove.

"I've been a bad girl, Sudie," said Johnsy. "Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how wicked I was. It is a sin to want to die. You may bring a me a little broth now, and some milk with a little port in it, and – no; bring me a hand-mirror first, and then pack some pillows about me, and I will sit up and watch you cook." And hour later she said:

"Sudie, some day I hope to paint the Bay of Naples."

The doctor came in the afternoon, and Sue had an excuse to go into the hallway as he left.

"Even chances," said the doctor, taking Sue's thin, shaking hand in his. "With good nursing you'll win." And now I must see another case I have downstairs. Behrman, his name is – some kind of an artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is an old, weak man, and the attack is acute. There is no hope for him; but he goes to the hospital to-day to be made more comfortable."

The next day the doctor said to Sue: "She's out of danger. You won. Nutrition and care now – that's all."

And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay, contentedly knitting a very blue and very useless woollen shoulder scarf, and put one arm around her, pillows and all.

"I have something to tell you, white mouse," she said. "Mr. Behrman died of pneumonia to-day in the hospital. He was ill only two days. The janitor found him the morning of the first day in his room downstairs helpless with pain. His shoes and clothing were wet through and icy cold. They couldn't imagine where he had been on such a

dreadful night. And then they found a lantern, still lighted, and a ladder that had been dragged from its place, and some scattered brushes, and a palette with green and yellow colors mixed on it, and – look out the window, dear, at the last ivy leaf on the wall. Didn't you wonder why it never fluttered or moved when the wind blew? Ah, darling, it's Behrman's masterpiece – he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell."

Glossary

Prowl, v - to move around an area in a quiet way, especially because you intend to do something bad.
Congenial, adj - friendly and enjoying the company of others
Smite(smote, smitten), v - hit someone or something very hard
Swagger, v - to walk in a proud and confident way
Decay, v - to be gradually destroyed as a result of a natural process of change, or to destroy something in this way; to become gradually worse in quality, or weaker in power or influence
Decay, n - the gradual destruction of something as a result of a natural process of change; the process by which a building or area gradually gets into a worse state because it has not been looked after
Derision,n - the opinion that someone or something is stupid, unimportant, or useless
Acute, adj - very serious or severe

Language Focus

1. Find the sentences in which the words from the glossary are used and translate them into Russian.

2. Match the words with their definitions. Recall the situations in which you come across these words.

quaint	put a small amount of a particular colour in something
daub	the time in the evening when the sky is beginning to get dark
tint	morally wrong and intending to hurt people
dissolution	interesting or attractive with a slightly strange quality

twilight	someone whose job is to take care of a public building
wicked	the process of gradually getting weaker or smaller and then disappearing
janitor	a small amount of wet substance spread on a surface in a careless way

3. Find English equivalents for the following word combinations and phrases.

Не получить ни единого цента по счету; оловянные кружки и пара жаровен; лабаринт узких, поросших мохом переулков; достойный противник для дюжего старого тупицы; действовать в интересах гробовщика; голос, резкий как губная гармоника; считать кареты в похоронной процессии; освободиться от всего, что держит; голова Сатира и тело гнома; издеваться над всякой сентиментальностью; сторожевой пес; принять первые штрихи шедевра; душа, чуждая всему земному; низко нависшая голландская кровля.

4. There are 3 main types of art: Visual Arts (V), Literary Arts (L) and Performing Arts (P). You will find an example of each in the columns below. How would you categorize the other art forms listed here? Some might be able to go into two or even all three columns.

• drama (acting)	**V**	**L**	**P**
• painting	**V**	**L**	**P**
• music	**V**	**L**	**P**
• fashion design	**V**	**L**	**P**
• cartoons (animation)	**V**	**L**	**P**
• film (cinema, movies)	**V**	**L**	**P**
• short stories	**V**	**L**	**P**
• novels	**V**	**L**	**P**
• photography	**V**	**L**	**P**

5. Art and Artists: suffixes

What do you call the people who perform or create these arts?
There are five suffixes that we commonly use for artists.
Be careful of spellings with some endings.

-ist -er -or -ian -ess

- sculpture ____
- dance ____
- poetry ____
- drama (acting) ____
- painting ____
- music ____
- fashion design ____
- movie making ____
- short stories ____
- novels ____
- photography ____
- cartoons (animation) ____

Reading Comprehension

1. Complete the summary.

Johnsy and Sue are __ who move into Greenwich Village in New York City. As winter approaches and the weather gets colder, __ becomes ill with pneumonia. She gets so sick that she believes that when the __ falls from the vine outside her window, she will die. An old artist, named __ who lives in the same building as the girls, braves a storm one night to __ a leaf on the wall - a leaf that will never fall. Cold and wet from painting in the icy rain, he catches __ and dies. This gives Johnsy the hope to survive her illness, and it also creates the __ Behrman had always dreamed of painting.

2. Here are ten lines from the end of the story. Put them into the correct order to find out how Mr Behrman created his masterpiece.

a) There was a light he has taken outside. ____
b) Mr Behrman died of pneumonia today in the hospital. ____
c) There was green and yellow paint. ____
d) He was helpless with pain. ____
e) He painted his great masterpiece before the last leaf fell. ____
f) And they found some things. ____

g) The night had been so cold and wild. ____
h) Someone found him in his room. ____
i) There were materials for painting. ____
j) His clothes were as wet and cold as ice. ____

Talking points

1. O.Henry is famous for surprise endings or "twists" in his stories. In The Last Leaf, Johnsy seems to be dying of pneumonia when the story begins, but it is Mr Behrman who dies in the end, while Johnsy survives. Now we know how Mr Behrman died, think of these other points and discuss them:

- What did Mr. Behrman paint before he died?
- Try to describe his masterpiece.
- What did Mr. Behrman's painting do for Johnsy to help her survive?
- What feeling did it give her?
- Why does Sue call "The Last Leaf" Behrman's masterpiece?

Another main character is Mr. Pneumonia, though he doesn't sound much like a painter. How would you describe Mr. Pneumonia?

2. A sacrifice is the act of giving up something, or not having something or doing something yourself, to help somebody else. We saw how Mr Behrman gave his life to help Johnsy in The Last Leaf. He made the greatest sacrifice anybody could make. But sacrifices are not always as great as Mr Behrman's. We make small sacrifices almost every day. How about you? What is the greatest sacrifice you have ever made for your family or friends?

Writing

A Rainy Season Setting

Write a one page composition describing the following place and time: your home during the rainy season. Think of some of the sounds, smells and sights inside and outside your house, both during the day and during the night. Think of some of the real situations you have had to face. Alternatively, you could use some experiences that friends or family have had and still use them with you as the main character.



Oscar Wilde was born in Dublin, Ireland on October 16, 1854. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin and Magdalen College, Oxford. He was considered a brilliant student. In 1878, his poem Ravenna won the Newdigate Prize. Shortly after leaving university his first volume of poetry was published. He moved to London in 1879.

Wilde married Constance Lloyd, the daughter of a wealthy Dublin barrister, in 1884 and the couple had two sons. Wilde wrote fairy stories for his boys. These were later published as The Happy Prince and Other Tales.

After being married for 11 years, Wilde had left his wife and began having a homosexual affair with Alfred Douglas. In May 1895, Wilde was prosecuted and imprisoned for homosexuality under the terms of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. He served two years in Old Bailey in London. Regrettable, his mother died while he was still in jail

In 1897, after being released from Reading Prison, Wilde moved to France. A year later he wrote The Ballad of Reading Gaol, a poem inspired by his prison experience. Wilde's time in prison badly damaged his health and he died on November 30, 1900, in Paris, France, three years after leaving prison. He is buried in Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, in a tomb designed by Epstein.

Famous quotations by Oscar Wilde:

- Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught.
- A man's face is his autobiography. A woman's face is her work of fiction.
- Men marry because they are tired; women because they are curious. Both are disappointed.
- When a woman marries again it is because she detested her first husband.
- When a man marries again, it is because he adored his first wife. Women try their luck; men risk theirs.
- Between men and women there is no friendship possible. There is passion, enmity, worship, love, but no friendship.
- One's past is what one is. It is the only way by which people should be judged.
- When the gods wish to punish us they answer our prayers.

- Ambition is the last refuge of the failure.
- To regret one's own experiences is to arrest one's own development. To deny one's own experiences is to put a lie into the lips of one's life. It is no less than a denial of the soul.
- It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious.

The Sphinx without a Secret

One afternoon I was sitting outside the Cafe de la Paix, watching the splendour and shabbiness of Parisian life, and wondering over my vermouth at the strange panorama of pride and poverty that was passing before me, when I heard some one call my name. I turned round, and saw Lord Murchison. We had not met since we had been at college together, nearly ten years before, so I was delighted to come across him again, and we shook hands warmly. At Oxford we had been great friends. I had liked him immensely, he was so handsome, so high-spirited, and so honourable. We used to say of him that he would be the best of fellows, if he did not always speak the truth, but I think we really admired him all the more for his frankness. I found him a good deal changed. He looked anxious and puzzled, and seemed to be in doubt about something. I felt it could not be modern scepticism, for Murchison was the stoutest of Tories, and believed in the Pentateuch as firmly as he believed in the House of Peers; so I concluded that it was a woman, and asked him if he was married yet.

‘I don’t understand women well enough,’ he answered.

‘My dear Gerald,’ I said, ‘women are meant to be loved, not to be understood.’

‘I cannot love where I cannot trust,’ he replied.

‘I believe you have a mystery in your life, Gerald,’ I exclaimed; ‘tell me about it.’

‘Let us go for a drive,’ he answered, ‘it is too crowded here. No, not a yellow carriage, any other colour - there, that dark-green one will do;’ and in a few moments we were trotting down the boulevard in the direction of the Madeleine.

‘Where shall we go to?’ I said.

‘Oh, anywhere you like!’ he answered - ‘to the restaurant in the Bois; we will dine there, and you shall tell me all about yourself.’

‘I want to hear about you first,’ I said. ‘Tell me your mystery.’

He took from his pocket a little silver-clasped morocco case, and handed it to me. I opened it. Inside there was the photograph of a

woman. She was tall and slight, and strangely picturesque with her large vague eyes and loosened hair. She looked like a clairvoyante, and was wrapped in rich furs.

'What do you think of that face?' he said; 'is it truthful?'

I examined it carefully. It seemed to me the face of some one who had a secret, but whether that secret was good or evil I could not say. Its beauty was a beauty moulded out of many mysteries - the beauty, in face, which is psychological, not plastic - and the faint smile that just played across the lips was far too subtle to be really sweet.

'Well,' he cried impatiently, 'what do you say?'

'She is the Gioconda in sables,' I answered. 'Let me know all about her.'

'Not now,' he said; 'after dinner;' and began to talk of other things.

When the waiter brought us our coffee and cigarettes I reminded Gerald of his promise. He rose from his seat, walked two or three times up and down the room, and, sinking into an armchair, told me the following story: -

'One evening,' he said, 'I was walking down Bond Street about five o'clock. There was a terrific crush of carriages, and the traffic was almost stopped. Close to the pavement was standing a little yellow brougham, which, for some reason or other, attracted my attention. As I passed by there looked out from it the face I showed you this afternoon. I fascinated me immediately. All that night I kept thinking of it, and all the next day. I wandered up and down that wretched Row, peering into every carriage, and waiting for the yellow brougham; but I could not find ma belle inconnue, and at last I began to think she was merely a dream. About a week afterwards I was dining with Madame de Rastail. Dinner was for eight o'clock; but at half-past eight we were still waiting in the drawing-room. Finally the servant threw open the door, and announced Lady Alroy. It was the woman I had been looking for. She came in very slowly, looking like a moonbeam in grey lace, and, to my intense delight, I was asked to take her in to dinner. After we had sat down I remarked quite innocently, "I think I caught sight of you in Bond Street some time ago, Lady Alroy." She grew very pale, and said to me in a low voice, "Pray do not talk so loud; you may be overheard." I felt miserable at having made such a bad beginning, and plunged recklessly into the subject of French plays. She spoke very little, always in the same low musical voice, and seemed as if she was afraid of some one listening. I fell passionately, stupidly in love, and the indefinable atmosphere of mystery that surrounded her excited my most ardent curiosity. When

she was going away, which she did very soon after dinner, I asked her if I might call and see her. She hesitated for a moment, glanced round to see if any one was near us, and then said, "Yes; tomorrow at a quarter to five." I begged Madame de Rastail to tell me about her; but all that I could learn was that she was a window with a beautiful house in Park Lane, and as some scientific bore began a dissertation of widows, as exemplifying the survival of the matrimonially fittest, I left and went home.

'The next day I arrived at Park Lane punctual to the moment, but was told by the butler that Lady Alroy had just gone out. I went down to the club quite unhappy and very much puzzled, and after long consideration wrote her a letter, asking if I might be allowed to try my chance some other afternoon. I had no answer for several days, but at last I got a little note saying she would be at home on Sunday at four, and with this extraordinary postscript: "Please do not write to me here again; I will explain when I see you." On Sunday she received me, and was perfectly charming; but when I was going away she begged of me, if I ever had occasion to write to her again, to address my letter to "Mrs. Knox, care of Whittaker's Library, Green Street." "There are reasons," she said, " why I cannot receive letters in my own house."

'All through the season I saw a great deal of her, and the atmosphere of mystery never left her. Sometimes I thought that she was in the power of some man, but she looked so unapproachable that I could not believe it. It was really very difficult for me to come to any conclusion, for she was like one of those strange crystals that one sees in museums, which are at one moment clear, and at another clouded. At last I determined to ask her to be my wife: I was sick and tired of the incessant secrecy that she imposed on all my visits, and on the few letters I sent her. I wrote to her at the library to ask her if she could see me the following Monday at six. She answered yes, and I was in the seventh heaven of delight. I was infatuated with her: in spite of the mystery, I thought then - in consequence of it, I see now. No; it was the woman herself I loved. The mystery troubled me, maddened me. Why did chance put me in its track?'

'You discovered it, then?' I cried.

'I fear so,' he answered. 'You can judge for yourself.'

'When Monday came round I went to lunch with my uncle, and about four o'clock found myself in the Marylebone Road. My uncle, you know, lives in Regent's Park. I wanted to get to Piccadilly, and took a short cut through a lot of shabby little streets. Suddenly I saw in

front of me Lady Alroy, deeply veiled and walking very fast. On coming to the last house in the street, she went up the steps, took out a latch-key, and let herself in. “Here is the mystery,” I said to myself; and I hurried on and examined the house. It seemed a sort of place for letting lodgings. On the doorstep lay her handkerchief, which she had dropped. I picked it up and put it in my pocket. Then I began to consider what I should do. I came to the conclusion that I had no right to spy on her, and I drove down to the club. At six I called to see her. She was lying on a sofa, in a tea-gown of silver tissue looped up by some strange moonstones that she always wore. She was looking quite lovely. “I am so glad to see you,” she said; “I have not been out all day.” I stared at her in amazement, and pulling the handkerchief out of my pocket, handed it to her. “You dropped this in Cumnor Street this afternoon, Lady Alroy,” I said very calmly. She looked at me in terror, but made no attempt to take the handkerchief. “What were you doing there?” I asked. “What right have you to question me?” she answered. “The right of a man who loves you,” I replied; “I came here to ask you to be my wife.” She hid her face in her hands, and burst into floods of tears. “You must tell me,” I continued. She stood up, and , looking me straight in the face, said, “Lord Murchison, there is nothing to tell you.” - “You went to meet some one,” I cried; “this is your mystery.” She grew dreadfully white, and said, “I went to meet no one,” - “Can’t you tell the truth?” I exclaimed. “I have told it,” she replied. I was mad, frantic; I don’t know what I said, but I said terrible things to her. Finally I rushed out of the house. She wrote me a letter the next day; I sent it back unopened, and started for Norway with Alan Colville. After a month I came back, and the first thing I saw in the Morning Post was the death of Lady Alroy. She had caught a chill at the Opera, and had died in five days of congestion of the lungs. I shut myself up and saw no one. I had loved her so much, I had loved her so madly. Good God! How I had loved that woman!’

‘You went to the street, to the house in it?’ I said.

‘Yes,’ he answered.

‘One day I went to Cumnor Street. I could not help it; I was tortured with doubt. I knocked at the door, and a respectable-looking woman opened it to me. I asked her if she had any rooms to let. “Well, sir,” she replied, “the drawing-rooms are supposed to be let; but I have not seen the lady for three months, and as rent is owing on them, you can have them.” - “Is this the lady?” I said, showing the photograph. “That’s her, sure enough,” she exclaimed; “and when is she coming back, sir?” - “The lady is dead,” I replied. “Oh, sir, I hope not!”

said the woman; "she was my best lodger. She paid me three guineas a week merely to sit in my drawing-rooms now and then." - "She met some one here?" I said; but the woman assured me that it was not so, that she always came alone, and saw no one. "What on earth did she do here?" I cried. "She simply sat in the drawing-room, sir, reading books, and sometimes had tea," the woman answered. I did not know what to say, so I have her a sovereign and went away. Now, what do you think it all meant? You don't believe the woman was telling the truth?'

'I do.'

'Then why did Lady Alroy go there?'

'My dear Gerald,' I answered, 'Lady Alroy was simply a woman with a mania for mystery. She took these rooms for the pleasure of going there with her veil down and imagining she was a heroine. She had a passion for secrecy, but she herself was merely a Sphinx without a secret.'

'Do you really think so?'

'I am sure of it,' I replied.

He took out the morocco case, opened it, and looked at the photograph. 'I wonder?' he said at last.

Glossary

shabby - in poor condition because they have been used a lot
stout [staut] - brave and determined
Pentateuch ['pentətju:k] – the first five books of the Old Testament; here to mean the Bible as a whole
The House of Peers – the House of Lords
the Madeleine – a beautiful 18th century church situated in Place de la Madeleine
slight - (of people) thin and delicate
vague[veɪg] -not clearly expressed
loosened hair- describes hair that is not tied back
mould [məuld] - to give sth a particular shape or form
subtle ['sʌtl] - not loud, bright, noticeable or obvious in any way
Gioconda – (= Mona Lisa) Leonardo da Vinci's portrait of Lisa, the wife of a Florentine, Francesco del Giocondo, which is famous for its subtle smile
brougham ['bru:əm] - a light carriage with four wheels and a roof
peer - to look carefully or with difficulty
ma belle inconnue (Fr.) – my beautiful stranger

plunge into – to start doing sth in an enthusiastic way, especially without thinking carefully about what you are doing
ardent[‘ɑd(ə)nt] - showing strong feelings
the survival of the matrimonially fittest – the survival of those who are best suited for matrimony (the survival of the fittest)
care of Whittaker's Library (abbreviated c/o) - is written on letters before the name of the person or institution to whose house, office, etc. a letter for another person is sent
infatuated [‘Infætjueɪtɪd] -having a very strong but not usually lasting feeling of love or attraction for someone or something
a short cut – a shorter way than by the main or generally recognized road
lung congestion - describes lungs that have become too full of blood or other liquid
What on earth…- "on earth" is used in questions expressing great surprise

Language focus

1. Complete the sentences with the right preposition.

1. Altman is admired …his technical skills.
2. She used to say she didn't believe … marriage.
3. We decided to wrap the dogs … blankets.
4. The children moulded little pots … … clay.
5. Customs official peered … the driver's window.
6. We are looking … a partner in a new business venture.
7. The city was plunged … darkness when the electricity supply was cut off in the storm.
8. They have imposed restrictions … trade with foreign companies.
9. He became infatuated … a woman at work.
10. Managers feel it is their duty to spy … the workforce.

2. Complete the table. Make sure you can translate each word.

Noun	***Adjective***	***Adverb***
	shabby	
frankness		
		immensely
		recklessly
amazement		

3. Form the pairs of synonyms from these words and translate them into Russian.

indefinable passionate stout inaccessible determined courageous sick and tired subtle indeterminable unapproachable imperceptible loathsome resolute ardent

4. Change the sentences into indirect speech.

- 'I cannot love where I cannot trust,' he replied.
- 'Let us go for a drive,' he answered, 'it is too crowded here.
- 'What do you think of that face?' he said; 'is it truthful?'
- 'One evening,' he said, 'I was walking down Bond Street about five o'clock. There was a terrific crush of carriages, and the traffic was almost stopped. Close to the pavement was standing a little yellow brougham, which, for some reason or other, attracted my attention.
- "You dropped this in Cumnor Street this afternoon, Lady Alroy," I said very calmly.
- "What were you doing there?" I asked.
- "You must tell me," I continued.
- She grew dreadfully white, and said, "I went to meet no one,"
- "Well, sir," she replied, "the drawing-rooms are supposed to be let; but I have not seen the lady for three months, and as rent is owing on them, you can have them."

5. Translate into Russian.

About a week afterwards I was dining with Madame de Rastail. Dinner was for eight o'clock; but at half-past eight we were still waiting in the drawing-room. Finally the servant threw open the door, and announced Lady Alroy. It was the woman I had been looking for. She came in very slowly, looking like a moon-beam in grey lace, and, to my intense delight, I was asked to take her in to dinner. After we had sat down I remarked quite innocently, "I think I caught sight of you in Bond Street some time ago, Lady Alroy." She grew very pale, and said to me in a low voice, "Pray do not talk so loud; you may be overheard." I felt miserable at having made such a bad beginning, and plunged recklessly into the subject of French plays. She spoke very little, always in the same low musical voice, and seemed as if she was afraid of some one listening. I fell passionately, stupidly in love, and the indefinable atmosphere of mystery that surrounded her excited my most ardent curiosity. When she was going away, which she did very soon after dinner, I asked her if I might call and see her. She hesitated for a moment, glanced round to see if any one was near us, and then said, "Yes; tomorrow at a quarter to five."

Reading Comprehension

1. Answer the following questions.

1. How does the author describe Lord Murchison as he remembered him at Oxford?
2. In what way had Lord Murchison changed when the author met him again?
3. Why didn't he want to hire a yellow carriage?
4. What did he think of the face Lord Murchison showed him?
5. Where had Lord Murchison first met Lady Alroy? What had he done to see her again?
6. Under what circumstances did the second meeting take place?
7. What did they talk about at dinner?
8. Why did Lord Murchison write a letter to Lady Alroy?
9. What did Lord Murchison think of Lady Alroy?
10. Why did he decide to ask Lady Alroy to be his wife?
11. Why was he infatuated with her?
12. How did Lord Murchison happen to see Lady Alroy in a shabby street? What did he find out?
13. What happened when Lord Murchison called on her later? Why did she burst into tears?
14. What made Lord Murchison mad and frantic? What did he do the next day?
15. How did Lady Alroy die?
16. What did Lord Murchison learn from his visit to Cumnor Street?
17. What was the explanation of Lady Alroy's behaviour suggested by the author?

2. Here is a list of the characteristics of each horoscope star sign. Try to decide the star sign of Lady Alroy and Lord Murchison.

Aries

They are strong-willed and determined. They will communicate exactly what they feel with confidence, and are very focused when necessary. Although these characteristics can come across in different ways, it is quite clear that most Aries make great leaders. They are the first sign in the Zodiac and always want to be the first to get things going. Their strong drive makes them rather appealing. People are naturally drawn to those who know exactly what they want in life, and Arians definitely give off this aura. While they are great at making points, and have the qualities to be leaders, their interest in projects tends to wane. They are great at leading for as long

as they want to lead. Sometimes this isn't for as long as necessary. As one can imagine Aries can be a great annoyance if you disagree with them. They have no problem being blunt and refuse to be the one to end an argument. Despite all of this, they do not take things personally and do not attack others people's characters. To an Aries the importance is simply voicing their opinion. Arians personalities are steady. They never get too upset or too happy. Rather, they concentrate their energy outwards on all the things they believe they want to accomplish. Arians are surprisingly loyal and as a result make great friends. It is always better to have an Arian on your side rather then being pitted against one. Although Arians won't take arguments personally they will make bad enemies if they decide they don't like you for other reasons.

Taurus

Unlike the Aries love of the game, Taurus loves the rewards of the game. They are also a tactile lot, enjoying a tender, even sensual, touch. Taureans adore comfort and like being surrounded by pleasing, soothing things. Along these lines, they also favor a good meal and a fine wine. It's the Bull that serves as the Taurean's mascot, and along with that comes the expectation that these folks are bull-headed and stubborn. Taureans don't start out with the intention of getting stuck. They simply want to get things done, and it's that steady, dogged persistence that winds up being viewed as stubbornness. Bulls are actually among the most practical and reliable members of the Zodiac, and they are happy to plod along, as it were, in pursuit of their goals. The good news for Bulls is that once they get to the finish line, they'll swaddle themselves in material goods.

Gemini

Twins are always interesting and Geminis follow this pattern. The mix of two personalities comes from one person. What does all this mean? A whole bunch. We'll start with the good. Being two people in one can be very useful and this usefulness peaks when it comes to their mind. Quite simply they are able to see both sides of an issue. This makes for wonderful intellectual discussions. They are able to be objective because they truly understand where both sides are coming from in a debate. They are skilled at this and know it. Therefore, they are always ready for a serious discussion. They are always subconsciously preparing for one. Due to this, Geminis constantly take in and retain information. They store it away to use it at a later time. Geminis understand that the best discussions are with the ones they are closest to and appreciate loved ones. They like relationships and are bright, and as a re-

sult most Geminis are quick minded, and a joy to be around. Although they are not necessarily eager to be, they often find themselves being the life of the party.

What can be bad about a Gemini? Well, it is all a matter of opinion, but Geminis can be unpredictable. Sometimes it is hard to know which side of a Gemini is going to turn up. If you get familiar with one side, you may be disappointed if a Geminis suddenly starts acting differently. Geminis can be extremely ambitious, with the desires of two people. This is can be a positive, but sometimes they can set out to do too much, and as a result accomplish little. Generally Geminis have good intentions. If you understand them you can certainly avoid negativity. They are truly fun to be around.

Cancer

If Dorothy from Wizard of OZ had a Zodiac sign it would definitely be a Cancer. Dorothy knows there is no place like home and Cancers share the same exact sentiments. The rest of us can't really argue against them, can we? Home is a place of comfort and nurture and Cancers are especially appreciative of this. They like large families and are eager to keep the home environment pleasant and serene. Traditions and honor are of great importance to these folks. Cancers believe embracing tradition is necessary. They are loyal to the group and this extends beyond the home. They tend to support sports teams and they eagerly wave the flags of their country when it is deemed necessary.

Like a crab, which represents their sign, Cancers like to have a shell to protect them if they believe they need it. If you are not in the inner circle of a Cancer, (that is whatever the Cancer defines as family), you are not likely to get to know his or her inner feelings. Unfortunately some people respond to this the wrong way. They make a great effort to get a Cancer out of his or her shell. This is the wrong thing to do. Cancers will let you know this in their own way, and it may be an unpleasant experience. Nobody will come out of their house if somebody tries to force their way in and take them out. One leaves their house when they choose and when they are comfortable. Fortunately, when Cancers eventually do come out of their shell they are quite charming. Having chosen to let you in to their worlds, you may realize that Cancers are more confident and comfortable than most. They will show their full range of emotions, from laughing to crying. They are determined and strong willed . They will remain this way unless you appear to pose some threat to whoever it is who is in their inner family. Never forget what makes a Cancer tick; it is the love of home.

Leo

If you know somebody that is the life of the party, the chances are that person is a Leo. They love attention. They get it, and very often deserve it. Leos are charismatic, charming, and comfortable in the spotlight. They have a sense of purpose and are ambitious. One will find that many celebrities are Leos, and the ones that aren't popular still try to find a way on some sort of stage. Talent is common among our friends who fall under the fifth Sign of the Zodiac, and they know how to make it known in a dramatic fashion. Energy and warmth embody what a Leo is. They enjoy having fun and enjoy giving pleasure to those around them. Leos can predictably rub some people the wrong way, particularly Scorpions. Leos let their views be known and can do so in a loud and flamboyant way. They always want to be the leaders and luckily, most of the time they make good ones. They are symbolized by the Lion. Indeed, they try to live up to this reputation of king of the jungle. Like Lions they have dignity and strength. Like lions they are aware of their strength and will let absolutely no one push them around. However, they have far too much warmth to ever use this ability. A Leo is a good team player in certain ways. They will make sure a project gets done. However, they can intimidate some who are on the quiet or shy side. Still, a Leo does more good than harm. With their loud, but charming personality, Leos inspire those around them.

Virgo

Virgos understand humanity and get great joy from knowing they are helping people. They want nothing in return. Their desire to assist others leads Virgos to paying extreme attention to details. They know what is going on with those around them, knowing what is needed to help others if they should ever ask for help. Like angels, Virgos exist to do good. However, they do not mettle in other peoples business. They are there if and when they are needed. Those that fall under this sixth sign of the Zodiac are often associated with virgins. They do share some characteristics, specifically modesty and sincerity. However, there is much more to a Virgo. Their attention to detail makes for a very logical and practical mind. Their approach to life often leads them to embracing philosophy. A desire to help others combined with their logical minds leads Virgos to explaining what motivates them and studying what motivates others. Virgos make great workers. They pay attention to details and will not let their bosses down. If they are at the top of a company they feel obligated to their employees to perform. Everybody generally likes Virgos.

Libra

Libras live life through relationships with people. Whether it is friends, acquaintances or lovers, Libras focus on others. They analyze how they relate to people and do their best to make these relationships work. To Libras the world is not as complicated as some make it out to be. Rather they believe our focus should be on the people in our life, because it is through each other that we all ultimately find happiness. Their commitment to this philosophy leads Libras to being remarkably fair. They understand the need for balance in life and are respectful of different tendencies and personalities. Predictably Libras make great partners in marriage. What truly motivates a Libra is subject to much debate. Is it an overwhelming desire for good, or an overwhelming hate of conflict? The truth lies somewhere in the middle. The two characteristics feed off each other leaving Libras doing what ever it takes to avoid conflict, both because of dislike for the conflict itself, as well as for their desire for things to work out. Their constant quest to avoid conflict may lead some to conclude that Libras are afraid. Libras are confident that this is not the case, and predictably don't mind if you have the wrong impression of them. Libras are compassionate and principled. Libras want the best for everyone and thus, are willing to sacrifice a little if doing so truly leaves everyone else better off.

Scorpio

They have a strong drive to learn, but they know exactly what it is they want to know. They want to learn about others and concentrate on this while interacting with people. Aimless chatter plays no role in the lives of those that fall under this eighth sign of the Zodiac. For them, life is as simple as black in white. There is no confusion, no color gray in-between the lines. Their curiosity is strong, and combining this with their focus, leads Scorpios to being great investigators. They are comfortable and eager probing to get to the root of things. Scorpions are persistent. They have their eyes on a goal, and they keep moving forward towards that goal regardless of what may be around them. They will work hard if it allows them to experience satisfaction. They are intense and ambitious. Because they know what they want, and are equally aware that there are many individuals who do not, they refuse to be held back by others. Their drive ensures that they will be successful at most things they set their mind on. Real scorpions are known for their willingness to kill themselves rather than be killed by others. The people who fall under the sign represented by this animal have a similar desire to control their destiny. All this focused energy can lead to some being turned off by Scorpions.

Sagittarius

These are people who are seeking truth, and are willing to hit the road, traveling wherever it takes to find it. Whether it is physically, or spiritually, Sagittarians wander through life seeking answers to age-old questions rooted in philosophy and religion. Finding the meaning of life and quenching a desire for knowledge is what motivates those that fall under this ninth sign of the Zodiac. They ask questions and are good listeners, both of these characteristics add to their open personality. They may relate to those around them in different ways but one thing is common amongst our free spirited friends, they are motivated from within, searching constantly for the soul of man. They spend so much time trying to answer the big questions in life that they are certain of what they don't accept as truth. These clear minded individuals will bluntly let whoever they disagree with know why and how they differ in opinion. However, they do not do so to slight or hurt the next person. Rather, they simply are excited and motivated by truth. This is what they are committed to, and concentrating on another's feelings isn't important to them in the grand scheme of things.

Capricorn

If you're looking for a Capricorn and cannot find him or her, the place to look would be the office. Two words sum up the most prominent characteristic of Capricorns, they are hard and work. Say what you want about those who fall under the tenth sign of the Zodiac, but one thing is certain, they are focused and ambitious. They know getting to the top is not easy, but they are willing to do what it takes. They are practical and pragmatic. Their approach to life can translate into stubborn ways. They savor success and winning, and are not ashamed by this. So what is the personality of our driven friends? Well it matters who you ask. Some say they are domineering, others say they are egotistical. To Capricorns it doesn't really matter. They are like the goat that represents their sign. A goat doesn't stop and think about what it is doing. A goat operates on instinct. Goats are often depicted roaming along mountainsides trying to reach the top. A Capricorn follows this picture quite closely. Their drive to reach the top often leaves them in leadership roles. They are not interested in controversy they are simply efficient, focused and keep their eyes on the prize. Patience comes naturally to Capricorns. Rather predictably for such determined people, they do not approve of others who do not share the same grandiose ambition that they do.

Aquarius

Analyzing ways that the world can be made better is a frequent activity of those belonging to this eleventh Sign of the Zodiac. Aquarians are philanthropic, humanitarian and extremely interested in improving the state of the world. Their altruistic characteristics lead them to focusing their efforts on helping social institutions. This great social conscience, combined with their eagerness to engage others in this process, attracts many friends and acquaintances. Aquarians are visionaries, and are willing to work together to make the world a better place. Fortunately for the world, Aquarians are more than people who share positive thoughts. They are also bearers of brilliant minds and with their great intelligence; they produce interesting ideas which are intriguing to those they share them with. However, all is not perfect in the world of Aquarians. They do create admirable new ideas, but they are very intolerant of opposite views. Their eagerness to find ways to change the world leads them to be impatient with others. This eagerness can overwhelm a degree of etiquette that should be expected. They can often be labeled eccentric. They are free spirited and enjoy traveling. Although Aquarians can posses unconventional ways and a streak of stubbornness, they are appreciative of their friends, and truly do want to make the world a better place.

Pisces

Pisces is the twelfth Sign of the Zodiac, and it is also the final Sign in the Zodiacal cycle. These folks are selfless, spiritual and very focused on their inner journey. They also place great weight on what they are feeling. Yes, feelings define Pisceans, and it's not uncommon for them to feel their own burdens (and joys) as well as those of others. The intuition of the Pisces-born is highly-evolved. Many people associate Pisceans with dreams and secrets, and it's a fair association, since those born under this Sign feel comfortable in an illusory world. It's a pair of Fish that represents Pisceans, a symbol which prompts others to suggest that these people 'go with the flow' and 'don't make waves.' Both of these labels are true, since Pisceans are fluid and easygoing. The fact that two fish (as opposed to one) represent the members of this Sign also speaks to the duality of Pisceans, their yin and yang sensibility. Pisceans alternate between reality and non-reality in keeping with their introspective natures; their voyage between consciousness and an unconscious dream state says much about their intuitive, almost psychic natures. For this reason, Pisceans can be hard to pin down, prompting some to call them the chameleons of the Zodiac. The Fish are happy to be considered hazy, since there's a certain sense

of safety in that self-proclaimed netherworld. Pisceans are compassionate, charitable and will quickly put the needs of others ahead of their own. It's this kind of self-sacrifice which keeps these folks going.

3. Try to find words which begin with the letters and describe Lady Alroy.

A ....
L ....
R ....
O ....
Y ....

Talking points

1. Read the comments on this story. Which one describes your opinion the best?

– This story is not about the woman, it is about the man. It is about the woman's ability to interest and impassion the gentleman. He becomes more and more obsessed with her the more the mystery deepens. He is very much overcome with ambiguity – he loves her because she is mysterious, and he distrusts her because she is mysterious. And, the mystery is all in his mind and her performance: any feline creature knows that this is true.

– This story was very sad indeed. It was terrible that Lord Murchison never knew the good side of Lady Alroy.

– I find the title of the story extremely suited, lady Alroy, the woman who wanted mystery in her life when actually it was mere simplicity, and the story invites you to wonder about the author's message with the mysterious style when actually. Actually the story itself might be like lady Alroy without any true mystery...

– To my mind, this short story is particularly mysterious through the attitude of the different characters. I didn't really like this story, first because of the sad end. Moreover i advice if you don't want to be bored don't read this story. However i don't critic Oscar Wilde but he did better.

2. What's your opinion?

1. What is the story about?
2. What is the author's message, if any?
3. What is your opinion of Lady Alroy? Give her character sketch.
4. What had her previous life been like before she met Lord Murchison?
5. What is your opinion of Lord Murchison? Give his character sketch.

3. Here are the quotations from the works of Oscar Wilde. Agree or disagree using the phrases in the table.

Giving your opinion	Disagreement
I think ...	Just other way round.
I suppose...	I've got some reasons to disagree.
I guess...	On the one hand ...
If you ask me...	On the other hand ...
The way I see it...	Well, I'm not sure.
Well, I must say...	I disagree, I'm afraid.
From my point of view...	I can't agree with...
As far as I'm concerned...	I'm not at all convinced...
In my view/ opinion...	That's not the way I see it.
(Personally) I believe...	
It seems to me...	

- "Women are meant to be loved, not to be understood."
  "The Sphinx Without a Secret"
- "I am sick of women who love one. Women who hate one are much more interesting."
  "The Picture of Dorian Gray"
- "The public have an insatiable curiosity to know everything, except what is worth knowing."
  "The Soul of Man Under Socialism"
- "Life is never fair...And perhaps it is a good thing for most of us that it is not."
  "An Ideal Husband"
- "Amancanbehappywithanywomanaslongashedoesnotloveher."
  "The Picture of Dorian Gray"
- "Nowadays all the married men live like bachelors and all the bachelors live like married men."
  "The Picture of Dorian Gray"

- "I don't like compliments, and I don't see why a man should think he is pleasing a woman enormously when he says to her a whole heap of things that he doesn't mean."
  "Lady Windermere's Fan"

Writing

- What do you think was written in the letter Lord Murchison sent back unopened? Write Lady's Alroy letter to Lord Murchison.
- What might Lady Alroy have written in her diary after she had met Lord Murchison at the house of Madame de Rastail?



Irwin Shaw (1913–1984). Born and educated in New York City, where he received a B.A. from Brooklyn College in 1934, Shaw began his career as a scriptwriter for popular radio programs of the 1930s, and went on to Hollywood to write for the movies. Disillusioned with the film industry, Shaw returned to New York. His first piece of serious writing, an antiwar play entitled *Bury the Dead*, was produced on Broadway in 1936. About this time, Shaw began contributing short stories to such magazines as the *New Yorker* and *Esquire*. His first collection of stories, *Sailor off the Bremen and Other Stories* (1939), earned him an immediate and lasting reputation as a writer of fiction. While continuing to write plays and stories, Shaw turned to the novel and published *The Young Lions* in 1948, which won high critical praise as one of the most important novels to come out of World War II. The commercial success of the book and the movie adaptation brought Shaw financial independence and allowed him to devote the rest of his career to writing novels, among them *The Troubled Air* (1951), *Lucy Crown* (1956), *Rich Man, Poor Man* (1970), *and Acceptable Losses* (1982). Shaw's stories are collected in *Short Stories: Five Decades* (1978).

Peter Two

It was Saturday night and people were killing each other by the hour on the small screen. Policemen were shot in the line of duty, gangsters were thrown off roofs, and an elderly lady was slowly poisoned for her pearls, and her murderer brought to justice by a cigarette company after a long series of discussions in the office of a private detective. Brave, unarmed actors leaped at villains holding forty-fives, and ingénues were saved from death by the knife by the quick thinking of various handsome and fearless young men.

Peter sat in the big chair in front of the screen, his feet up over the arm, eating grapes. His mother wasn't at home, so he ate the seeds and all as he stared critically at the violence before him. When his mother was around the fear of appendicitis hung in the air and she watched carefully to see that each seed was neatly extracted and placed in an ashtray. Too, if she were at home, there would be irritated little lectures on the quality of television entertainment for the young, and quick-tempered fiddling with the dials to find something that was vaguely defined as educational. Alone, daringly awake at

eleven o'clock, Peter ground the seeds between his teeth, enjoying the impolite noise and the solitude and freedom of the empty house. During the television commercials Peter closed his eyes and imagined himself hurling bottles at large unshaven men with pistols and walking slowly up dark stairways toward the door behind which everyone knew the Boss was waiting, the bulge of his shoulder holster unmistakable under the cloth of his flannel jacket.

Peter was thirteen years old. In his class there were three other boys with the same given name, and the history teacher, who thought he was a funny man, called them Peter One, Peter Two (now eating grapes, seeds and all), Peter Three, and Peter the Great. Peter the Great was, of course, the smallest boy in the class. He weighed only sixty-two pounds, and he wore glasses, and in games he was always the last one to be chosen. The class always laughed when the history teacher called out "Peter the Great" and Peter Two laughed with them, but he didn't think it was so awfully funny.

He had done something pretty good for Peter the Great two weeks ago, and now they were what you might call friends. All the Peters were what you might call friends, on account of that comedian of a history teacher. They weren't real friends, but they had something together, something the other boys didn't have. They didn't like it, but they had it, and it made them responsible for each other. So two weeks ago, when Charley Blaisdell, who weighed a hundred and twenty, took Peter the Great's cap at recess and started horsing around with it, and Peter the Great looked as if he was going to cry, he, Peter Two, grabbed the cap and gave it back and faced Blaisdell. Of course, there was a fight, and Peter thought it was going to be the third defeat of the term, but a wonderful thing happened. In the middle of the fight just when Peter was hoping one of the teachers would show up (they sure showed up plenty of times when you didn't need them), Blaisdell let a hard one go. Peter ducked and Blaisdell hit him on the top of the head and broke his arm. You could tell right off he broke his arm, because he fell to the ground yelling, and his arm just hung like a piece of string. Walters, the gym teacher, finally showed up and carried Blaisdell off, yelling all the time, and Peter the Great came up and said admiringly, '"Boy, one thing you sure have to admit, you sure have a hard head."

Blaisdell was out of class two days, and he still had his arm in the sling and every time he was excused from writing on the blackboard because he had a broken arm, Peter had a nice warm feeling all over. Peter the Great hung around him all the time, doing things for him

and buying him sodas, because Peter the Great's parents were divorced and gave him all the money he wanted, to make up to him. And that was O.K.

But the best thing was the feeling he'd had since the fight. It was like what the people on the television must feel after they'd gone into a room full of enemies and come out with the girl or with the papers or with the suspect, leaving corpses and desolation behind them.

Blaisdell weighed one hundred and twenty pounds but that hadn't stopped Peter any more than the fact the spies all had two guns apiece ever stopped the F.B.I, men on the screen. They saw what they had to do and they went in and did it, that was all. Peter couldn't phrase it for himself, but for the first time in his life he had a conscious feeling of confidence and pride in himself.

"Let them come," he muttered obscurely, munching grape seeds and watching the television set through narrowed eyes, "just let them come."

He was going to be a dangerous man, he felt, when he grew up, but one to whom the weak and the unjustly hunted could safely turn. He was sure he was going to be six feet tall, because his father was six feet tall, and all his uncles, and that would help. But he would have to develop his arms. They were just too thin. After all, you couldn't depend on people breaking their bones on your head every time. He had been doing pushups each morning and night the past month. He could only do five and a half at a time so far, but he was going to keep at it, until he had arms like steel bars. Arms like that could really mean the difference between life and death later on, when you had to dive under the gun and disarm somebody. You had to have quick reflexes, too, of course, and be able to feint to one side with your eyes before the crucial moment. And, most important of all, no matter what the odds, you had to be fearless. One moment of hesitation and it was a case for the morgue. But now, after the battle of Peter the Great's cap, he didn't worry about that part of it, the fearless part. From now on, it would just be a question of technique.

Comedians began to appear all over the dial, laughing with a lot of teeth, and Peter went into the kitchen and got another bunch of grapes and two tangerines from the refrigerator. He didn't put on the light in the kitchen and it was funny how mysterious a kitchen could be near midnight when nobody else was at home, and there was only the beam of the light from the open refrigerator, casting shadows from the milk bottles onto the linoleum. Until recently he hadn't liked the dark too much and he always turned on lights wherever he went,

but you had to practice being fearless, just like anything else.

He ate the two tangerines standing in the dark in the kitchen, just for practice. He ate the seeds, too, to show his mother. Then he went back into the living room, carrying the grapes.

The comedians were still on and still laughing. He fiddled with the dial, but they were wearing funny hats and laughing and telling jokes about the income tax on all the channels. If his mother hadn't made him promise to go to sleep by ten o'clock, he'd have turned off the set and gone to bed. He decided not to waste his time and got down on the floor and began to do pushups, trying to be sure to keep his knees straight. He was up to four and slowing down when he heard the scream. He stopped in the middle of a pushup and waited, just to make sure. The scream came again. It was a woman and it was real loud. He looked up at the television set. There was a man there, talking about floor wax, a man with a mustache and a lot of teeth, and it was a cinch he wasn't doing any screaming.

The next time a scream came there was moaning and talking at the end of it, and the sound of fists beating on the front door. Peter got up and turned off the television, just to be sure the sounds he was hearing weren't somehow being broadcast.

The beating on the door began again and a woman's voice cried "Please, please, please..." and there was no doubt about it any more. Peter looked around him at the empty room. Three lamps were lit and the room was nice and bright and the light was reflected off the grapes and off the glass of the picture of the boats Cape Cod that his Aunt Martha painted the year she was up there. The television set stood in the corner, like a big blind eye now that the light was out. The cushions of the soft chair he had been sitting in to watch the programs were pushed in and he knew his mother would come and plump them out before she went to sleep, and the whole room looked like a place in which it was impossible to hear a woman screaming at midnight and beating on the door with her fists and yelling "Please, please, please,..."

The woman at the door yelled, "Murder, murder, he's killing me" and for the first time Peter was sorry his parents had gone out that night.

"Open the door," the woman yelled. "Please, please open. the door." You could tell she wasn't saying please just to be polite by now.

Peter looked nervously around him. The room, with all its lights, seemed strange, and there were shadows behind everything. Then the woman yelled again, just noise this time. Either a person is fear-

less, Peter thought coldly, or he isn't fearless. He started walking slowly toward the front door. There was a long mirror in the foyer and he got a good look at himself. His arms looked very thin.

The woman began hammering once more on the front door and Peter looked at it closely. It was a big steel door, but it was shaking minutely, as if somebody with a machine was working on it. For the first time he heard another voice. It was a man's voice, only it didn't sound quite like a man's voice. It sounded like an animal in a cave, growling and deciding to do something unreasonable. In all the scenes of threat and violence on the television set,, Peter had never heard anything at all like it He moved slowly toward the door, feeling the way he had felt when he had the flu, remembering how thin his arms looked in the mirror, regretting that he had decided to be fearless.

"Oh, God!" the woman yelled. "Oh, God, don't do it!"

Then there was some more hammering and the low animal sound of the beast in the cave that you never heard over the air, and he threw the door open.

Mrs Chalmers was there in the vestibule, on her knees, facing him, and behind her Mr Chalmers was standing, leaning against the wall, with the door to his own apartment open behind him. Mr Chalmers was making that funny sound and he had a gun in his hand and he was pointing it at Mrs Chalmers.

The vestibule was small and it had what Peter's mother called Early American wall-paper and a brass lamp. There were only the two doors opening on the vestibule, and the Chalmers had a mat in front of theirs with "Welcome" written on it. The Chalmers were in their midthirties and Peter's mother always said about them, "One thing about our neighbours, they are quiet." She also said that Mrs Chalmers put a lot of money on her back.

Mrs Chalmers was kind of fat, and her hair was a pretty blond and her complexion was soft and pink and she always looked as though she had been in the beauty parlor all afternoon. She always said, "My, you're getting to be a big boy" to Peter when she met him in the elevator, in a soft voice, as though she was just about to laugh. She must have said that fifty times by now. She had a good, strong smell of perfume on her all the time, too.

Mr Chalmers wore pince-nez glasses most of the time and he was getting bald and he worked late at his office a good many evenings of the week. When he met Peter in the elevator he would say, "It's getting colder," or "It's getting warmer," and that was all, so Peter had no opinion about him, except that he looked like the principal of a

school.

But now Mrs Chalmers was on her knees in the vestibule and her dress was torn and she was crying and there were black streaks on her cheeks and she didn't look as though she'd just come from the beauty parlor. And Mr Chalmers wasn't wearing a jacket and he didn't have his glasses on and what hair he had was mussed all over his head and he was leaning against the Early American wallpaper making this animal noise, and he had a big, heavy pistol in his hand and he was pointing it right at Mrs Chalmers.

"Let me in," Mrs Chalmers yelled, still on her knees. "You've got to let me in! He's going to kill me! Please."

"Mrs Chalmers..." Peter began. His voice sounded as though he were trying to talk under water, and it was very hard to say the "s" at the end of her name. He put out his hands uncertainly in front of him, as though he expected somebody to throw him something.

"Get inside, you!" Mr Chalmers said.

Peter looked at Mr Chalmers. He was only five feet away and without his glasses he was squinting. Peter feinted with his eyes, or at least later in his lire he thought he had feinted with his eyes. Mr Chalmers didn't do anything. He just stood there, with his pistol pointed, somehow, it seemed to Peter, at both Mrs Chalmers and; himself at the same time. Five feet was a long distance, a long, long distance.

"Good night," Peter said, and closed the door.

There was a single sob on the other side of the door and that was all.

Peter went in and put the uneaten grapes back in the refrigerator, turning on the light as he went into the kitchen and leaving it on when he went out. Then he went back to the living room and got the stems from the first bunch of grapes and threw them into the fireplace, because otherwise his mother would notice and look for the seeds and not see them and give him four table-spoons of milk of magnesia the next day.

Then, leaving the lights on in the living room, although he knew what his mother would say about that when she got home, he went into his room and quickly got into bed. He waited for the sounds of shots. There were two or three noises that might have been shots, but in the city it was hard to tell

He was still awake when his parents came home. He heard his mother's voice,. and he knew from the sound she was complaining about the lights in the living room and kitchen, but he pretended to be sleeping when she came into his room to look at him. He didn't want

to start in with his mother about the Chalmers, because then she'd ask when it had happened and she would want to know what he was doing up at twelve o'clock.

He kept listening for shots for a long time, and he got hot and damp under the covers and then freezing cold. He heard several sharp, ambiguous noises in the quiet night, but nothing that you could be sure about; and after a while he fell asleep.

In the morning, Peter got out of bed early, dressed quickly, and went silently out of the apartment without waking his parents. The vestibule looked just the way it always did, with the brass lamp and the flowered wall-paper and the Chalmers doormat with "Welcome" on it. There were no bodies and no blood. Sometimes when Mrs Chalmers had been standing there waiting for the elevator, you could smell her perfume for a long time after. But now there was no smell of perfume, just the dusty apartment house usual smell. Peter stared at the Chalmers' door nervously while waiting for the elevator to come up, but it didn't open and no sound came from within.

Sam, the man who ran the elevator and who didn't like him, anyway, only grunted when Peter got into the elevator, and Peter decided not to ask him any questions. He went out into the chilly, bright Sunday-morning street, half expecting to see the morgue wagon in front of the door, or at least two or three prowl cars. But there was only a sleepy woman in slacks airing a boxer and a man with his collar turned up hurrying up from the corner with the newspapers under his arm.

Peter went across the street and looked up to the sixth floor, at the windows of the Chalmers' apartment. The Venetian blinds were pulled shut in every room and all the windows were closed.

A policeman walked down the other side of the street, heavy, blue and purposeful, and for a moment Peter felt close to arrest. But the policeman continued on toward the avenue and turned the corner and disappeared and Peter said to himself: "They never know anything."

He walked up and down the street, first on one side, then on the other waiting, although it was hard to know what he was waiting for. He saw a hand come out through the blinds in his parents' room and slam the window shut, and he knew he ought to get upstairs quickly with a good excuse for being out, but he couldn't face them this morning, and he would invent an excuse later. Maybe he would even say he had gone to the museum, although he doubted that his mother would swallow that. Some excuse. Later.

Then, after he had been patrolling the street for almost two hours, and just as he was coming up to the entrance of his building, the door opened and Mr and Mrs Chalmers came out. He had on his pince-nez and a dark-gray hat, and Mrs Chalmers had on her fur coat and a red hat with feathers on it. Mr Chalmers was holding the door open politely for his wife, and she looked, as she came out the door, as though she had just come from the beauty parlor.

It was too late to turn back or avoid them, and Peter just stood still, five feet from the entrance.

"Good morning," Mr Chalmers said as he took his wife's arm and they started walking past Peter.

"Good morning, Peter," said Mrs Chalmers in her soft voice, smiling at him. "Isn't it a nice day today?"

"Good morning," Peter said, and he was surprised that it came out and sounded like good morning.

The Chalmers walked down the street toward Madison Avenue, two married people, arm in arm, going to church or to a big hotel for Sunday breakfast. Peter watched them, ashamed. He was ashamed of Mrs Chalmers for looking the way she did the night before, down on her knees, and yelling like that and being so afraid. He was ashamed of Mr Chalmers for making the noise that was not like the noise of a human being, and for threatening to shoot Mrs Chalmers and not doing it. And he was ashamed for himself because he had been fearless when he opened the door, but had not been fearless ten seconds later, with Mr Chalmers five feet away with the gun. He was ashamed of himself for not taking Mrs Chalmers into his apartment, ashamed because he was not lying now with a bullet in his heart. But most of all he was ashamed because they all had said good morning to each other and the Chalmers were walking quietly together, arm in arm, in the windy sunlight, toward Madison Avenue.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when Peter got back to the apartment, but his parents had gone back to sleep. There was a pretty good program on at eleven, about counterspies in Asia, and he turned it on automatically, while eating an orange. It was pretty exciting, but then there was a part in which an Oriental held a ticking bomb in his hand in a roomful of Americans, and Peter could tell what was coming. The hero, who was fearless and who came from California, was beginning to feint with his eyes, and Peter reached over and turned the set off, It closed down with a shivering, collapsing pattern. Blinking a little, Peter watched the blind screen for a moment.

Ah, he thought in sudden, permanent disbelief, after the night in

which he had faced the incomprehensible, shameless, weaponed grown-up world and had failed to disarm it, ah, they can have that, that's for kids.

Glossary

villain, n – the main bad character in a story , play, film; an evil person or criminal
violent, adj – someone who is violent tends to attack people physically and try to harm them
violence, n – violent behaviour
fiddle, v – to touch or move something with many small quick movements of your fingers
solitude, n – the state of being completely alone
holster, n – a leather container for a gun
recess, n - Am E a period between school lessons
corpse, n – the body of a dead person
desolation, n – the state of a place where everything has been destroyed
mutter, v – to talk in a quiet voice that is difficult to hear
munch, v – to eat something using your teeth and jaws in a noisy way
crucial, adj – extremely important
moan, v – if someone moans , they make a long low sound because of pain, sadness or pleasure
beast, n – an animal , especially a dangerous or strange one
ambiguous, adj - not clear ; difficult to understand
blind, n – a window cover that you pull down from the top to the bottom

Language Focus

1. Recall the situations in which you come across the words from the glossary.

2. Find in the story American English equivalents for the following British English words. Sometimes the difference is only in spelling.

Br E: break (a period of time between lessons); lift (a machine that carries people up or down); head teacher (a teacher who is in charge of a school); press-up (a physical exercise); beauty parlour (a shop where you can get beauty treatments for your skin or hair).

3. Find English equivalents for the following word combinations and phrases:

Убивали друг друга без перерыва; при исполнении служебных обязанностей; во время телевизионной рекламы; иметь крепкую голову; рука на перевязи; оставляя после себя трупы и разрушение; чувство уверенности в себе; делать отжимания; быть бесстрашным; вопрос техники; не сгибать колени; барабанить по двери; звук животного в клетке; сильный запах духов; выглядеть как директор школы; жалюзи были закрыты; придумать оправдание; ему было стыдно; не удалось разоружить; непонятный мир взрослых.

4. Match the words with their synonyms.

a. to save	1. to yell
b. to leap	2. courageous
c. irritated	3. to rescue
d. vague	4. to jump
e. solitude	5. to throw
f. to hammer	6. annoyed
g. to scream	7. obscure
h. to hurl	8. loneliness
i. fearless	9. to beat

5. Complete the following sentences with the correct preposition:

1. Policemen were shot ..... the line ..... duty, gangsters were thrown ..... roofs.
2. If she were ..... home, there would be irritated little lectures ..... the quality ..... television entertainment ..... the young.
3. ..... his class there were three other boys ..... the same given name.
4. Every time he was excused ..... writing ..... the blackboard because he had a broken arm.
5. ..... the first time ..... his life he had a conscious feeling ..... confidence and pride ..... himself.
6. One moment ..... hesitation and it was a case ..... the morgue.
7. Peter went ..... the kitchen and got another bunch ..... grapes and two tangerines ..... the refrigerator.
8. The room, ... all its lights, seemed strange, and there were shadows ..... everything.
9. Then he went back ..... the living room and got the stems ..... the first bunch ..... grapes and threw them ..... the fireplace.
10. He walked ..... and ..... the street, first ..... one side, then ..... the other waiting, although it was hard to know what he was waiting ..... .

Reading Comprehension

1. Are the following sentences true or false?

1. Peter was fond of watching cartoons.
2. His mother approved of his choice of TV programmes.
3. Peter was going to be a strong and dangerous man.
4. He was afraid to be alone at home.
5. Peter did physical exercises every day in order to become stronger.
6. Mr and Mrs Chalmers were the neighbours of Peter's family.
7. Peter managed to defend Mrs Chalmers when her husband wanted to kill her.
8. After helping Mrs Chalmers Peter had a feeling of confidence and pride in himself.

2. Recall the situations in which the following lines were used. Whose utterances are they?

1. – Boy, one thing you sure have to admit, you sure have a hard head.
2. – One thing about our neighbours, they are quiet.
3. – My, you're getting to be a big boy.
4. – You've got to let me in! He's going to kill me! Please!
5. – Get inside, you!
6. – Good night.
7. – Good morning, Peter. Isn't it a nice day today?

3. Answer the following questions:

1. What TV programmes did Peter like watching?
2. What sort of man was Peter going to be when he grew up? How did he practise being fearless?
3. When and why did Peter have a conscious feeling of confidence and pride in himself for the first time?
4. What sounds did Peter hear when he was doing pushups?
5. What sort of couple lived next door to Peter's flat? In what way were the Chalmers different that night from what they usually looked?
6. Why did Peter open the door?
7. Did Peter manage to help Mrs Chalmers?
8. What happened in the morning?
9. What were Peter's feelings after he saw the Chalmers walking down the street arm in arm?
10. What did Peter begin to understand after the night in which he had faced the incomprehensible, shameless grown-up world?

Talking points

1. Discuss the relationships between Peter and his mother. Find the lines in the story which may support your point of view.
2. Give a character sketch of Peter Two. Comment on his desire to become a strong and fearless man. Is it normal for teenagers to dream of such things?
3. How can television influence our life? Discuss good and bad sides of television. Can it affect the formation of children's personalities?
4. Do you like the ending of the story? What would you change if you were given such an opportunity?
5. How would you behave in a really dangerous situation in which you could save somebody's life?

Writing

Write a short summary of the story.
Write an essay on the topic "Advantages and Disadvantages of Television".



William Cuthbert Faulkner (September 25, 1897 – July 6, 1962) was an American novelist and poet whose works feature his native state of Mississippi. He is regarded as one of the most influential writers of the twentieth century and was awarded the 1949 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Faulkner was known for an experimental style with meticulous attention to diction and cadence, in contrast to the minimalist understatement of his peer Ernest Hemingway. Faulkner is sometimes lauded as the inventor of the «stream-of-consciousness» technique in fiction, although this is misleading; other writers such as Henry James, James Joyce and Edouard Dujardin had used this technique before him.

Along with Mark Twain and perhaps Tennessee Williams and Truman Capote, Faulkner is considered one of the most important «Southern writers». While his work was published regularly from the mid 1920s to the late 1940s, he was relatively unknown before receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1949. Critics and the public now favor his work.

Quotations by William Faulkner:

- Always dream and shoot higher than you know you can do. Don't bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to be better than yourself.
- An artist is a creature driven by demons. He doesn't know why they choose him and he's usually too busy to wonder why.
- Given a choice between grief and nothing, I'd choose grief.
- It's a shame that the only thing a man can do for eight hours a day is work. He can't eat for eight hours; he can't drink for eight hours; he can't make love for eight hours. The only thing a man can do for eight hours is work.
- Maybe the only thing worse than having to give gratitude constantly is having to accept it.
- Unless you're ashamed of yourself now and then, you're not honest.

What does the title tell you about the story? What might the story be about?

A Rose for Emily

I

When Miss Emily Grierson died, our whole town went to her funeral: the men through a sort of respectful affection for a fallen monument, the women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one save an old man-servant – a combined gardener and cook – had seen in at least ten years.

It was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street. But garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighborhood; only Miss Emily's house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps – an eyesore among eyesores. And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of Jefferson.

Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town, dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the mayor – he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron – remitted her taxes, the dispensation dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity. Not that Miss Emily would have accepted charity. Colonel Sartoris invented an involved tale to the effect that Miss Emily's father had loaned money to the town, which the town, as a matter of business, preferred this way of repaying. Only a man of Colonel Sartoris' generation and thought could have invented it, and only a woman could have believed it.

When the next generation, with its more modern ideas, became mayors and aldermen, this arrangement created some little dissatisfaction. On the first of the year they mailed her a tax notice. February came, and there was no reply. They wrote her a formal letter, asking her to call at the sheriff's office at her convenience. A week later the mayor wrote her himself, offering to call or to send his car for her, and received in reply a note on paper of an archaic shape, in a thin, flowing calligraphy in faded ink, to the effect that she no longer went out at all. The tax

notice was also enclosed, without comment.

They called a special meeting of the Board of Aldermen. A deputation waited upon her, knocked at the door through which no visitor had passed since she ceased giving china-painting lessons eight or ten years earlier. They were admitted by the old Negro into a dim hall from which a stairway mounted into still more shadow. It smelled of dust and disuse – a close, dank smell. The Negro led them into the parlor. It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture. When the Negro opened the blinds of one window, they could see that the leather was cracked; and when they sat down, a faint dust rose sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single sun-ray. On a tarnished gilt easel before the fireplace stood a crayon portrait of Miss Emily's father.

They rose when she entered – a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold head. Her skeleton was small and spare; perhaps that was why what would have been merely plumpness in another was obesity in her. She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough as they moved from one face to another while the visitors stated their errand.

She did not ask them to sit. She just stood in the door and listened quietly until the spokesman came to a stumbling halt. Then they could hear the invisible watch ticking at the end of the gold chain.

Her voice was dry and cold. "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Colonel Sartoris explained it to me. Perhaps one of you can gain access to the city records and satisfy yourselves."

"But we have. We are the city authorities, Miss Emily. Didn't you get a notice from the sheriff, signed by him?"

"I received a paper, yes," Miss Emily said. "Perhaps he considers himself the sheriff. . . . I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But there is nothing on the books to show that, you see. We must go by the – "

"See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But, Miss Emily – "

"See Colonel Sartoris." (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.) "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Tobe!" The Negro appeared. "Show these gentlemen out."

II

So she vanquished them, horse and foot, just as she had vanquished their fathers thirty years before about the smell. That was two years after her father's death and a short time after her sweetheart – the one we believed would marry her – had deserted her. After her father's death she went out very little; after her sweetheart went away, people hardly saw her at all. A few of the ladies had the temerity to call, but were not received, and the only sign of life about the place was the Negro man – a young man then – going in and out with a market basket.

"Just as if a man – any man – could keep a kitchen properly," the ladies said; so they were not surprised when the smell developed. It was another link between the gross, teeming world and the high and mighty Griersons.

A neighbor, a woman, complained to the mayor, Judge Stevens, eighty years old.

"But what will you have me do about it, madam?" he said.

"Why, send her word to stop it," the woman said. "Isn't there a law?"

"I'm sure that won't be necessary," Judge Stevens said. "It's probably just a snake or a rat that nigger of hers killed in the yard. I'll speak to him about it."

The next day he received two more complaints, one from a man who came in diffident deprecation. "We really must do something about it, Judge. I'd be the last one in the world to bother Miss Emily, but we've got to do something." That night the Board of Aldermen met – three graybeards and one younger man, a member of the rising generation.

"It's simple enough," he said. "Send her word to have her place cleaned up. Give her a certain time to do it in, and if she don't . . ."

"Dammit, sir," Judge Stevens said, "will you accuse a lady to her face of smelling bad?"

So the next night, after midnight, four men crossed Miss Emily's lawn and slunk about the house like burglars, sniffing along the base of the brickwork and at the cellar openings while one of them performed a regular sowing motion with his hand out of a sack slung from his shoulder. They broke open the cellar door and sprinkled lime there, and in all the outbuildings. As they recrossed the lawn, a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, the light behind her, and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol. They crept quietly across the lawn and into the shadow of the locusts that lined the street. After a week or two the smell went away.

That was when people had begun to feel really sorry for her. People in our town, remembering how old lady Wyatt, her great-aunt, had gone completely crazy at last, believed that the Griersons held themselves a little too high for what they really were. None of the young

men were quite good enough for Miss Emily and such. We had long thought of them as a tableau; Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door. So when she got to be thirty and was still single, we were not pleased exactly, but vindicated; even with insanity in the family she wouldn't have turned down all of her chances if they had really materialized.

When her father died, it got about that the house was all that was left to her; and in a way, people were glad. At last they could pity Miss Emily. Being left alone, and a pauper, she had become humanized. Now she too would know the old thrill and the old despair of a penny more or less.

The day after his death all the ladies prepared to call at the house and offer condolence and aid, as is our custom. Miss Emily met them at the door, dressed as usual and with no trace of grief on her face. She told them that her father was not dead. She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body. Just as they were about to resort to law and force, she broke down, and they buried her father quickly.

We did not say she was crazy then. We believed she had to do that. We remembered all the young men her father had driven away, and we knew that with nothing left, she would have to cling to that which had robbed her, as people will.

III

She was sick for a long time. When we saw her again, her hair was cut short, making her look like a girl, with a vague resemblance to those angels in colored church windows – sort of tragic and serene.

The town had just let the contracts for paving the sidewalks, and in the summer after her father's death they began the work. The construction company came with niggers and mules and machinery, and a foreman named Homer Barron, a Yankee – a big, dark, ready man, with a big voice and eyes lighter than his face. The little boys would follow in groups to hear him cuss the niggers, and the niggers singing in time to the rise and fall of picks. Pretty soon he knew everybody in town. Whenever you heard a lot of laughing anywhere about the square, Homer Barron would be in the center of the group. Presently we began to see him and Miss Emily on Sunday afternoons driving in the yellow-wheeled buggy and the matched team of bays from the livery stable.

At first we were glad that Miss Emily would have an interest, because

the ladies all said, "Of course a Grierson would not think seriously of a Northerner, a day laborer." But there were still others, older people, who said that even grief could not cause a real lady to forget noblesse oblige – without calling it noblesse oblige. They just said, "Poor Emily. Her kinsfolk should come to her." She had some kin in Alabama; but years ago her father had fallen out with them over the estate of old lady Wyatt, the crazy woman, and there was no communication between the two families. They had not even been represented at the funeral.

And as soon as the old people said, "Poor Emily," the whispering began. "Do you suppose it's really so?" they said to one another. "Of course it is. What else could . . ." This behind their hands; rustling of craned silk and satin behind jalousies closed upon the sun of Sunday afternoon as the thin, swift clop-clop-clop of the matched team passed: "Poor Emily."

She carried her head high enough – even when we believed that she was fallen. It was as if she demanded more than ever the recognition of her dignity as the last Grierson; as if it had wanted that touch of earthiness to reaffirm her imperviousness. Like when she bought the rat poison, the arsenic. That was over a year after they had begun to say "Poor Emily," and while the two female cousins were visiting her.

"I want some poison," she said to the druggist. She was over thirty then, still a slight woman, though thinner than usual, with cold, haughty black eyes in a face the flesh of which was strained across the temples and about the eyesockets as you imagine a lighthouse-keeper's face ought to look. "I want some poison," she said.

"Yes, Miss Emily. What kind? For rats and such? I'd recom – "

"I want the best you have. I don't care what kind."

The druggist named several. "They'll kill anything up to an elephant. But what you want is – "

"Arsenic," Miss Emily said. "Is that a good one?"

"Is . . . arsenic? Yes, ma'am. But what you want – "

"I want arsenic."

The druggist looked down at her. She looked back at him, erect, her face like a strained flag. "Why, of course," the druggist said. "If that's what you want. But the law requires you to tell what you are going to use it for."

Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up. The Negro delivery boy brought her the package; the druggist didn't come back. When she opened the package at home there was written on the box, under the skull and bones: "For rats."

IV

So the next day we all said, “She will kill herself”; and we said it would be the best thing. When she had first begun to be seen with Homer Barron, we had said, “She will marry him.” Then we said, “She will persuade him yet,” because Homer himself had remarked – he liked men, and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elks’ Club – that he was not a marrying man. Later we said, “Poor Emily” behind the jalousies as they passed on Sunday afternoon in the glittering buggy, Miss Emily with her head high and Homer Barron with his hat cocked and a cigar in his teeth, reins and whip in a yellow glove.

Then some of the ladies began to say that it was a disgrace to the town and a bad example to the young people. The men did not want to interfere, but at last the ladies forced the Baptist minister – Miss Emily’s people were Episcopal – to call upon her. He would never divulge what happened during that interview, but he refused to go back again. The next Sunday they again drove about the streets, and the following day the minister’s wife wrote to Miss Emily’s relations in Alabama.

So she had blood-kin under her roof again and we sat back to watch developments. At first nothing happened. Then we were sure that they were to be married. We learned that Miss Emily had been to the jeweler’s and ordered a man’s toilet set in silver, with the letters H. B. on each piece. Two days later we learned that she had bought a complete outfit of men’s clothing, including a nightshirt, and we said, “They are married. “ We were really glad. We were glad because the two female cousins were even more Grierson than Miss Emily had ever been.

So we were not surprised when Homer Barron – the streets had been finished some time since – was gone. We were a little disappointed that there was not a public blowing-off, but we believed that he had gone on to prepare for Miss Emily’s coming, or to give her a chance to get rid of the cousins. (By that time it was a cabal, and we were all Miss Emily’s allies to help circumvent the cousins.) Sure enough, after another week they departed. And, as we had expected all along, within three days Homer Barron was back in town. A neighbor saw the Negro man admit him at the kitchen door at dusk one evening.

And that was the last we saw of Homer Barron. And of Miss Emily for some time. The Negro man went in and out with the market basket, but the front door remained closed. Now and then we would see her at a window for a moment, as the men did that night when they sprinkled the lime, but for almost six months she did not appear on the streets. Then we knew that this was to be expected too; as if that quality of her father which had thwarted her woman’s life so many times had been

too virulent and too furious to die.

When we next saw Miss Emily, she had grown fat and her hair was turning gray. During the next few years it grew grayer and grayer until it attained an even pepper-and-salt iron-gray, when it ceased turning. Up to the day of her death at seventy-four it was still that vigorous iron-gray, like the hair of an active man.

From that time on her front door remained closed, save for a period of six or seven years, when she was about forty, during which she gave lessons in china-painting. She fitted up a studio in one of the downstairs rooms, where the daughters and grand-daughters of Colonel Sartoris' contemporaries were sent to her with the same regularity and in the same spirit that they were sent to church on Sundays with a twenty-five-cent piece for the collection plate. Meanwhile her taxes had been remitted.

Then the newer generation became the backbone and the spirit of the town, and the painting pupils grew up and fell away and did not send their children to her with boxes of color and tedious brushes and pictures cut from the ladies' magazines. The front door closed upon the last one and remained closed for good. When the town got free postal delivery Miss Emily alone refused to let them fasten the metal numbers above her door and attach a mailbox to it. She would not listen to them.

Daily, monthly, yearly we watched the Negro grow grayer and more stooped, going in and out with the market basket. Each December we sent her a tax notice, which would be returned by the post office a week later, unclaimed. Now and then we would see her in one of the downstairs windows – she had evidently shut up the top floor of the house – like the carven torso of an idol in a niche, looking or not looking at us, we could never tell which. Thus she passed from generation to generation – dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse.

And so she died. Fell ill in the house filled with dust and shadows, with only a doddering Negro man to wait on her. We did not even know she was sick; we had long since given up trying to get any information from the Negro. He talked to no one, probably not even to her, for his voice had grown harsh and rusty, as if from disuse.

She died in one of the downstairs rooms, in a heavy walnut bed with a curtain, her gray head propped on a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight.

V

The negro met the first of the ladies at the front door and let them in, with their hushed, sibilant voices and their quick, curious glances, and then he disappeared. He walked right through the house and out the back and was not seen again.

The two female cousins came at once. They held the funeral on the second day, with the town coming to look at Miss Emily beneath a mass of bought flowers, with the crayon face of her father musing profoundly above the bier and the ladies sibilant and macabre; and the very old men – some in their brushed Confederate uniforms – on the porch and the lawn, talking of Miss Emily as if she had been a contemporary of theirs, believing that they had danced with her and courted her perhaps, confusing time with its mathematical progression, as the old do, to whom all the past is not a diminishing road, but, instead, a huge meadow which no winter ever quite touches, divided from them now by the narrow bottleneck of the most recent decade of years.

Already we knew that there was one room in that region above stairs which no one had seen in forty years, and which would have to be forced. They waited until Miss Emily was decently in the ground before they opened it.

The violence of breaking down the door seemed to fill this room with pervading dust. A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the valance curtains of faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights, upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man's toilet things backed with tarnished silver, silver so tarnished that the monogram was obscured. Among them lay a collar and tie, as if they had just been removed, which, lifted, left upon the surface a pale crescent in the dust. Upon a chair hung the suit, carefully folded; beneath it the two mute shoes and the discarded socks.

The man himself lay in the bed.

For a long while we just stood there, looking down at the profound and fleshless grin. The body had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace, but now the long sleep that outlasts love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him. What was left of him, rotted beneath what was left of the nightshirt, had become inextricable from the bed in which he lay; and upon him and upon the pillow beside him lay that even coating of the patient and biding dust.

Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron-gray hair.

Glossary

squarish - somewhat square in appearance or form
encroach -to advance beyond proper or former limits
obliterate – to remove all signs of sth, either by destroying or covering it completely
hereditary – given to a child by its parents before it is born
father – to create new ideas or a new way of doing sth
edict – an official order or statement given by sb in authority
remit – to cancel or free sb from a debt, duty, punishment, etc.
in perpetuity – for all time in the future
alderman – an elected member of a town or city council
dank – damp, cold and unpleasant
bloated – full of food and feeling uncomfortable
vanquish – to defeat sb completely in a competition, war, etc.
temerity – extremely confident behaviour that people are likely to consider rude
slink (slunk, slunk) – to move somewhere very quietly and slowly, especially because you are ashamed or do not want to be seen
condolence – sympathy that you feel for sb when a person in their family or that they know well has died: an expression of this sympathy
buggy – a small car, often without a roof or doors, used for a particular purpose
noblesse oblige – the idea that people who have special advantages of wealth, etc. should help other people who do not have these advantages
kin (pl. old-fashioned or formal) – your family or your relatives
fall out with – to quarrel with sb so that you are no longer friendly with them
dignity – the fact of being given honour and respect by people
divulge – to give sb information that is supposed to be secret
ally – a person who helps and support sb who is in a difficult situation
circumvent – to find a way of avoiding a difficulty or a rule
thwart – to prevent sb from doing what they want to do
virulent – extremely dangerous or harmful and quick to have an effect
perverse – showing deliberate determination to behave in a way that most people think is wrong, unacceptable or unreasonable
pervade – to spread through and be noticeable in every part of sth
grin – a wide smile
cuckold (old use) – to make another man/ woman a cuckold by having sex with his/ her wife/ husband

Language focus

1. Match the words in the left column with their synonyms in the right column.

encroach	humid
kin	withdraw
edict	erase
vanquish	frustrate
obliterate	invade
thwart	malicious
in perpetuity	family
dank	decree
remit	overcome
virulent	forever

2. Find eight words from the story. The words may appear in any direction. Make up sentences with the words.

d	z	e	f	g	x	p	a	f	e
e	r	a	w	r	l	a	t	c	a
d	y	l	u	i	o	a	n	s	j
i	s	l	i	n	k	e		o	m
v	d	y	d	f	l	l	j	k	g
u	m	r	c	o	z	g	v	u	w
l	z	e	d	f	a	t	h	e	r
g	z	n	i	w	h	e	i	s	v
e	o	y	v	n	b	u	g	g	y
c	i	p	e	r	v	e	r	s	e

3. Complete the sentences with the right prepositions.

1) He obviously has a great affection … Italy and its people.
2) We can meet to discuss this further … your convenience.
3) He vanished … the darkness.
4) The bus came … a halt just in time to avoid hitting the wall.
5) He wasn't sorry … hitting the other boy.
6) How could you turn … such a fantastic job?
7) Please dispose … your litter thoughtfully.
8) I'd fallen … … my neighbours.
9) The park closes … dusk.

4. Complete the interpretation of the story with the right form of the verbs in brackets.

William Faulkner speaks on "A Rose for Emily" in 1955:
I feel sorry for Emily's tragedy; her tragedy was, she was an only child, an only daughter. At first when she could (*find*) a husband, could (*have*) a life of her own, there was probably some one, her father, who said, "No, you must stay here and take care of me." And then when she (*find*) a man, she (*have*) no experience in people. She picked out probably a bad one, who was about to desert her. And when she (*lose*) him she could see that for her that was the end of life, there was nothing left, except to grow older, alone, solitary; she (*have*) something and she wanted to keep it, which is bad – to go to any length to keep something; but I pity Emily. I don't know whether I would have liked her or not, I might (*be afraid*) of her. Not of her, but of anyone who (*suffer*), (*be warped*), as her life (*be warped*) probably by a selfish father . . . .

[The title] was an allegorical title; the meaning was, here was a woman who had had a tragedy, an irrevocable tragedy and nothing could be done about it, and I pitied her and this was a salute . . . to a woman you would hand a rose.
From Faulkner at Nagano*, ed. Robert Jelliffe (Tokyo: Kenkyusha Ltd., 1956), pp. 70–71.*

Reading Comprehension

1. Are these statements true or false? Begin your answers with Yes, that's right or I'm afraid, that's wrong.

- Emily killed Homer Barron and kept him in the house for 30 years.
  □ true □ false
- Symbolism is not used in this story.
  □ true □ false
- Emily's mother wouldn't let her have boyfriends.
  □ true □ false
- The townspeople found a strand of gray hair beside the deceased body of Homer Barron.
  □ true □ false
- The story is told from the townspeople point of view.
  □ true □ false

- Emily and Homer Barron had a huge wedding celebration in the town.

  □ true □ false

2. Answer the questions.

1) What kind of person is Emily Grierson? Why does she live in the past? How do the townspeople feel about her? How do you feel about her?
2) Why weren't there suitable suitors for Emily?
3) Why does Emily take up with Homer Barron?
4) What kind of person is Homer Barron? Why do the townspeople consider him not good enough for Miss Emily?
5) What happened when he left? Did he abandon her? Why did he come back?
6) Why did she kill him?
7) What did Miss Emily think of the men scattering lime around her house?
8) How did the hair come to be on the pillow? How much hair is a strand?
9) What was her relationship to Tobe?
10) Did she lie beside the corpse? How often, for what period of years?
11) Why did she not leave the house for the last decade of her life?
12) Did she not know Colonel Sartoris had been dead ten years when she faced down the Aldermen?
13) How crazy was she (unable to distinguish fantasy from reality)?
14) Why does she allow so much dust in her house?

Which of these questions occurred to you? What would you add to this list?

Talking points

- Are there any passages or aspects of the story which leave you confused or which seem irrelevant to the plot? Are you reminded of any other stories you have read or seen on film or television?
- At what points did you notice any foreshadowing of the ending? Did the story prepare you to expect something different from Miss Emily?
- This story is told by "we". Who do you imagine this narrator (or narrators) to be? Young or old? Male or female? Both? What is their attitude toward Emily? How is this represented by their calling her "Miss Emily"? What do they remember about her?

How does this shape your attitude toward her? Do you find yourself sympathizing with her situation as the center of the town's attention (and gossip)?

- Women of the Old South and of a "good family" were often put on pedestals as paragons of virtue and respectability and given special treatment as "ladies." How do you see these attitudes at work in this story? How have they shaped Miss Emily's life and how people view her? Why is she called a "fallen monument" in the first paragraph?

Writing

Write a composition on “The Portrait of Emily Grierson”
What’s your opinion of this story? What questions would you like to ask the author? Write a letter to William Faulkner.



Shirley Jackson (1919–1965). Shirley Jackson was born on December 14, 1919 in San Francisco, California. After leaving the University of Rochester in 1934 she entered Syracuse University in 1937 as an English major. While at college, she and fellow classmate Stanley Edgar Hyman published a literary magazine known as “The Spectre”. Shortly after finishing her education, Shirley Jackson married Stanley Edgar Hyman in 1940 and they resided in Vermont. While raising four children, Jackson still found time to write.

In 1948 Jackson’s greatest success was achieved with the publication of her short story known as “The Lottery”. The idea for this story came to her while she was pushing her daughter in her stroller. When Jackson sat down to write “The Lottery”, the story came easily to her, and the draft that she sent to her agent came back almost word for word with only a few minor changes. Writers know that this is very unusual. Shirley Jackson received inspiration for her stories from her own life and childhood. She was never comfortable attending college at the University of Rochester or living in a New England town where her husband chose to teach. Many of her female characters reflect her own feelings of not belonging or fitting into the society where they lived. This is demonstrated when Tessie Hutchinson is cast out and stoned after she chooses the paper slip with the black dot on it. “The Lottery” demonstrates the true evil lying in each person’s heart. In 1952 “The Lottery” was adapted for television and in 1953 this short story was made into a play.

Shirley Jackson’s other great works are “Life Among the Savages” (1953) and “Raising Demons” (1957). These witty, humorous memoirs are about her life with her four children. They contrast sharply to the pessimism of her earlier works. Two of her last six novels entitled The Haunting of Hill House and We Have Always Lived in the Castle strengthened her reputation as a master of horror and psychological suspense. Shirley Jackson died on August 8, 1965 of heart failure.

The Lottery

The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o’clock;

in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 27th, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix – the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy"– eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys. and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted – as were the square dances, the teen club, the Halloween program – by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called, "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three- legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept

their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men. Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued. had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into he black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put way, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up – of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time,

some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on, "and then I looked out the window and the kids were gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty-seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through; two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your, Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully, "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?," and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now," Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar." several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar." he said. "That's right.

He’s broke his leg, hasn’t he? Who’s drawing for him?”
“Me, I guess,” a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her.
“Wife draws for her husband.” Mr. Summers said. “Don’t you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?” Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.
“Horace’s not but sixteen vet.” Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. “Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year.”
“Right,” Mr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, “Watson boy drawing this year?”
A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. “Here,” he said. “I m drawing for m’ mother and me.” He blinked his eyes nervously, and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like “Good fellow, Jack.” and “Glad to see your mother’s got a man to do it.”
“Well,” Mr. Summers said, “guess that’s everyone. Old Man Warner make it?”
“Here,” a voice said, and Mr. Summers nodded.
A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. “All ready?” he called. “Now, I’ll read the names – heads of families first – and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?”
The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions; most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, “Adams.” A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. “Hi, Steve,” Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said, “Hi, Joe.” They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family. not looking down at his hand.
“Allen.” Mr. Summers said. “Anderson.... Bentham.”
“Seems like there’s no time at all between lotteries any more.” Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row.
“Seems like we got through with the last one only last week.”
“Time sure goes fast,” Mrs. Graves said.
“Clark.... Delacroix”
“There goes my old man.” Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath

while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said, "Go on. Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next," Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hands, turning them over and over nervously. Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt.... Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for *them*. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live *that* way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's *always* been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries." Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in *that*," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke.... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson" The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers. holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saving. "Who is it?," "Who's got it?," "Is it the Dunbars?," "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers. "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie." Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."

"It wasn't *fair*," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe." Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family; that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said.

"There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed. "Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't *fair*. You didn't give him time enough

to choose. Everybody saw that."

Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

"Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

"Remember," Mr. Summers said, "take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help little Dave." Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davy." Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just one paper." Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you hold it for him." Mr. Graves took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Nancy next," Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box "Bill, Jr.," Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, near knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Tessie," Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Bill," Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be." Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

"All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill. Jr., opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

"Tessie," Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

"It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper. Bill."

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

"All right, folks." Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Mrs Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. "Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Mrs. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath. "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

Glossary

Acorn, n the fruit of the oak tree, eaten by animals, but not normally by humans
Beam, v smile very happily
Boisterous, adj noisy and active
Daintily, adv delicately, in a lady-like fashion
Defiant, adj refusing to obey a person or rule, **defiantly, adv**
Interminable, adj continuing for a long time in a boring or annoying way, **interminably**, **adv**
Lapse, v end without being renewed
Paraphernalia, n equipment
Petulantly, adv with unreasonable irritation
Rattle off, v say mechanically, without thought
Reluctant, **adj**, not willing to do something, **reluctantly**, **adv**

Scold, n a bad-tempered woman
Square dance an American folk dance, done with four couples facing each other in a square
Swearing- in, **n** the ceremony in which a public official takes his oath of office, formally promising to carry out his duties to the best of his abilities

Language Focus

1. Find the sentences in which the words from the glossary are used and translate them into Russian.

2. Match the word and its definition.

1. in bad repair or condition, poorly dressed	a. exploitation
2 .unavoidable, certain to happen	b. fill in for
3. numerous small possessions, tools, instruments	c. assemble
4. strong feeling of admiration or interest	d. enthusiasm
5. fill tightly with, press tightly into, fill the carcass of an animal	e. a slip of paper
6. gather together, collect, fit or put together	f. shabby
7. cause someone to take the oath of office	g. fade
8. express disapproval (to a person) severely and officially	h. reprimand
9. cause to lose color, freshness or strength, go slowly out of view	i. liberty
10. state of being free, right, or power to decide for oneself what to do	j. make do with
11. slow to act because unwilling to	k. stain
12. take the place of, substitute for	l. swear in
13. manage with something although it may not be really adequate or satisfactory	m. stuff
14. a small piece of paper	n. inevitable
15. selfish use for profit	o. paraphernalia
16. make dirty, discolored or stained	p. reluctant

3. Fill in the blanks in the sentences with the following words or expressions: out of date, lost his temper, shabby, a slip, paraphernalia, out of order, assembled, enthusiasm, reluctant, swears in, make do with, stuffed, exploitation.

1. The computer is ___________________ and we won't be able to use it.
2. I wrote his phone number on __________________ of paper and now I can't find it.
3. He __________________ and began to shout at the class.
4. He never loses his optimism, and does everything with ___________.
5. __________________ of the rain forests has contributed to global warming.
6. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court _________________ the new President of the United States.
7. He ________________ his bag full of food, for the two day trip.
8. We have all of the ____________________ necessary to build a stage for the play.
9. His clothes were _________________ and he was ashamed of his poverty.
10. A Palestinian state seems __________________ to a large percentage of the Israeli population.
11. Records have become ____________________ and only disks are sold these days.
12. The crowd ___________________ quietly and waited for the President to begin his speech.
13. We don't have a telephone and we have to ___________________ the public telephone on the corner.

4. For each of the underlined words or phrases provide a word or phrase with a meaning as close as possible to that of the original.

Ex. A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list.
The crowd was suddenly quiet/The crowd suddenly grew quiet

1. A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward.
2. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd.
3. "Some places have already quit lotteries," Mrs. Adams said.
4. "Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly.
5. "Well, everyone," Mr Summers said, "that was done pretty fast".

6. He dropped all the papers but those onto the ground where the breeze caught them and lifted them up.
7. Soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs.Hutchinson's arrival.

Reading Comprehension

1. What do the following words refer to?

1 It could begin at 10 o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow them to get home in time for noon dinner.
2. They began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes.
3. They came reluctantly, having to be called 4 or 5 times
4. He was a round- faced jovial man and he ran the coal bussiness
5. The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying it.
6. It had been lost long ago.
7. It had been made with some pieces of the one that had been constructed when the people settled down to make a village here.
8. Because so much of it had been forgotten, Mr. Summers had been succesful in having slips of paper substituted for the wood chips.
9. He used to stand just so when he said or sang it.
10. Now I'll read them and the men come up and take a paper out of....

2. Complete the summary.

On the clear and sunny morning of June 27, about _____ residents of an unnamed New England village gather in the main square. The children arrive first, collecting and piles up_____, followed by the men folk, and then the women. Mr. Summers runs the lottery, but the tradition dates back hundreds of years. On this day, Mr. Summers sets up the black lottery box in ______ of the square and calls for order. Each of the men representing their families pulls out a piece of paper from the black box: Anderson, Bentham, Dunbar, Delacroix, Hutchinson, Percy, and all the way to Zanini. The Hutchinson family is the "winner" on this day. The hushed crowd watches each member of the family, including little Davy Hutchinson, draws another _____from the box. Mrs. Hutchinson gets the slip with a black mark on it. Shouting "It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson is brutally murdered by her neighbors as they stone her to death.

3. Recall the situations with the following expressions.

1. I wish they'd hurry

2. They are almost through
3. Be a good sport
4. She hesitated for a moment
5. There was a stir in the crowd
6. She said, gasping for breath
7. I'll have to go ahead
8. I'll catch up with you
9. There used to be a saying about it

Talking points

1. Answer the following questions.

1. From the context of the story, who controls the town?
2. What do you think about this kind of control?
3. Is the structure of the town and the lottery democratic? How do you feel about it?
4. How were women viewed in the village? What role did they serve?
5. What does Mrs. Delacroix's extra-large stone say about loyalty and logic in "The Lottery"?
6. What does the large stone represent?
7. How did you feel about the town people's actions in "The Lottery"?
8. How is the choice of the lottery foreshadowed?
9. How does Shirley Jackson's choice to withhold the ultimate purpose of this tradition until the end of the story prove to be effective way to communicate with her readers? How did you feel at the end as a result of not knowing?

2. Explain the following.

1. Irony is used when the author contrasts what is said or described with what is really meant. In *The Lottery* we have an example of an ironic situation. How does the author increase the horror of the story by using irony? How does she fool the reader?
2. The lottery is run by two men named *Graves* and *Summers*. What significance can you see in the choice of names? Do any other names in the story have interesting connotations?

Writing

Write about a tradition in your town or family that is passed down from generation to generation.



Jack London is one of the greatest American novelists and short story writers. He was born on January 12, 1876 in San Francisco. Jack was raised by his mother Flora Wellman and his stepfather John London. Jack London left school at 14 and worked several different jobs. Eventually he returned to high school and graduated. At age of 19 Jack London was admitted to the University of California, Berkley, but he stayed there for only 6 months.

Jack London worked many different jobs during his lifetime including seaman, factory worker, railroad hobo, and even gold prospector in Klondike.

In 1900 Jack London married Bess Maddern and he had two daughters with her. They separated in 1903. After the separation from his first wife, Jack London married his secretary Charmain Kittredge.

Jack London was among the most publicized figures of his time, and he used this fact to support his socialistic views. He was one of the first writers to work with the movie industry; several of his novels were made into films.

Jack London wrote hundreds of short stories, and over 50 books, including such classics as “Call of the Wild” and “The Sea Wolf”

Jack London died at the age of forty on November 22, 1916.

To Kill a Man

THOUGH dim night-lights burned, she moved familiarly through the big rooms and wide halls, seeking vainly the half-finished book of verse she had mislaid and only now remembered. When she turned on the lights in the drawing-room, she disclosed herself clad in a sweeping negligee gown of soft rose-colored stuff, throat and shoulders smothered in lace. Her rings were still on her fingers, her massed yellow hair had not yet been taken down. She was delicately, gracefully beautiful, with slender, oval face, red lips, a faint color in the cheeks, and blue eyes of the chameleon sort that will stare wide with the innocence of childhood, go hard and gray and brilliantly cold, or flame up in hot wilfulness and mastery.

She turned the lights off and passed out and down the hall toward the morning room. At the entrance she paused and listened. From farther on had come, not a noise, but an impression of movement. She could have sworn she had not heard anything, yet something

had been different. The atmosphere of night quietude had been disturbed. She wondered what servant could be prowling about. Not the butler, who was notorious for retiring early save on special occasion. Nor could it be her maid, whom she had permitted to go that evening.

Passing on to the dining-room, she found the door closed. Why she opened it and went on in, she did not know, except for the feeling that the disturbing factor, whatever it might be, was there. The room was in darkness, and she felt her way to the button and pressed. As the blaze of light flashed on, she stepped back and cried out. It was a mere "Oh!" and it was not loud.

Facing her, alongside the button, flat against the wall, was a man. In his hand, pointed toward her, was a revolver. She noticed, even in the shock of seeing him, that the weapon was black and exceedingly long-barreled. She knew black and exceedingly long it for what it was, a Colt's. He was a medium-sized man, roughly clad, brown-eyed, and swarthy with sunburn. He seemed very cool. There was no wabble to the revolver and it was directed toward her stomach, not from an outstretched arm, but from the hip, against which the forearm rested.

"Oh," she said. "I beg your pardon. You startled me. What do you want?"

"I reckon I want to get out," he answered, with a humorous twitch to the lips. "I've kind of lost my way in this here shebang, and if you'll kindly show me the door I'll cause no trouble and sure vamoose."

"But what are you doing here?" she demanded, her voice touched with the sharpness of one used to authority.

"Plain robbing, Miss, that's all. I came snooping around to see what I could gather up. I thought you wan't to home, seein' as I saw you pull out with your old man in an auto. I reckon that must a ben your pa, and you're Miss Setliffe."

Mrs. Setliffe saw his mistake, appreciated the naive compliment, and decided not to undeceive him.

"How do you know I am Miss Setliffe?" she asked.

"This is old Setliffe's house, ain't it?"

She nodded.

"I didn't know he had a daughter, but I reckon you must be her. And now, if it ain't botherin' you too much, I'd sure be obliged if you'd show me the way out."

"But why should I? You are a robber, a burglar."

"If I wan't an ornery shorthorn at the business, I'd be accumulatin'

them rings on your fingers instead of being polite," he retorted.

"I come to make a raise outa old Setliffe, and not to be robbing women-folks. If you get outa the way, I reckon I can find my own way out."

Mrs. Setliffe was a keen woman, and she felt that from such a man there was little to fear. That he was not a typical criminal, she was certain. From his speech she knew he was not of the cities, and she seemed to sense the wider, homelier air of large spaces.

"Suppose I screamed?" she queried curiously. "Suppose I made an outcry for help? You couldn't shoot me? . . . a woman?"

She noted the fleeting bafflement in his brown eyes. He answered slowly and thoughtfully, as if working out a difficult problem. "I reckon, then, I'd have to choke you and maul you some bad."

"A woman?"

"I'd sure have to," he answered, and she saw his mouth set grimly.

"You're only a soft woman, but you see, Miss, I can't afford to go to jail. No, Miss, I sure can't. There's a friend of mine waitin' for me out West. He's in a hole, and I've got to help him out." The mouth shaped even more grimly. "I guess I could choke you without hurting you much to speak of."

Her eyes took on a baby stare of innocent incredulity as she watched him.

"I never met a burglar before," she assured him, "and I can't begin to tell you how interested I am."

"I'm not a burglar, Miss. Not a real one," he hastened to add as she looked her amused unbelief. "It looks like it, me being here in your house. But it's the first time I ever tackled such a job. I needed the money bad. Besides, I kind of look on it like collecting what's coming to me."

"I don't understand," she smiled encouragingly. "You came here to rob, and to rob is to take what is not yours."

"Yes, and no, in this here particular case. But I reckon I'd better be going now."

He started for the door of the dining-room, but she interposed, and a very beautiful obstacle she made of herself. His left hand went out as if to grip her, then hesitated. He was patently awed by her soft womanhood.

"There!" she cried triumphantly. "I knew you wouldn't."

The man was embarrassed.

"I ain't never manhandled a woman yet," he explained, "and it don't come easy. But I sure will, if you set to screaming."

"Won't you stay a few minutes and talk?" she urged. "I'm so interested. I should like to hear you explain how burglary is collecting what is coming to you."

He looked at her admiringly.

"I always thought women-folks were scairt of robbers," he confessed. "But you don't seem none."

She laughed gaily.

"There are robbers and robbers, you know. I am not afraid of you, because I am confident you are not the sort of creature that would harm a woman. Come, talk with me a while. Nobody will disturb us. I am all alone. My-- father caught the night train to New York. The servants are all asleep. I should like to give you something to eat--women always prepare midnight suppers for the burglars they catch, at least they do in the magazine stories. But I don't know where to find the food. Perhaps you will have something to drink?"

He hesitated, and did not reply; but she could see the admiration for her growing in his eyes.

"You're not afraid?" she queried. "I won't poison you, I promise. I'll drink with you to show you it is all right."

"You sure are a surprise package of all right," he declared, for the first time lowering the weapon and letting it hang at his side. "No one don't need to tell me ever again that women-folks in cities is afraid. You ain't much--just a little soft pretty thing. But you've sure got the spunk. And you're trustful on top of it. There ain't many women, or men either. who'd treat a man with a gun the way you're treating me."

She smiled her pleasure in the compliment, and her face, was very earnest as she said:

"That is because I like your appearance. You are too decent-looking a man to be a robber. You oughtn't to do such things. If you are in bad luck you should go to work. Come, put away that nasty revolver and let us talk it over. The thing for you to do is to work."

"Not in this burg," he commented bitterly. "I've walked two inches off the bottom of my legs trying to find a job. Honest, I was a fine large man once. . . before I started looking for a job."

The merry laughter with which she greeted his sally obviously pleased him, and she was quick to note and take advantage of it. She moved directly away from the door and toward the sideboard.

"Come, you must tell me all about it while I get that drink for you. What will it be? Whisky?"

"Yes, ma'am," he said, as he followed her, though he still carried the

big revolver at his side, and though he glanced reluctantly at the unguarded open door.

She filled a glass for him at the sideboard.

"I promised to drink with you," she said hesitatingly. "But I don't like whisky. I . . . I prefer sherry."

She lifted the sherry bottle tentatively for his consent.

"Sure," he answered, with a nod. "Whisky's a man's drink. I never like to see women at it. Wine's more their stuff."

She raised her glass to his, her eyes meltingly sympathetic.

"Here's to finding you a good position--"

But she broke off at sight of the expression of surprised disgust on his face. The glass, barely touched, was removed from his wry lips.

"What is the matter!" she asked anxiously. "Don't you like it? Have I made a mistake?"

"It's sure funny whisky. Tastes like it got burned and smoked in the making."

"Oh! How silly of me! I gave you Scotch. Of course you are accustomed to rye. Let me change it."

She was almost solicitiously maternal, as she replaced the glass with another and sought and found the proper bottle.

"Better?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am. No smoke in it. It's sure the real good stuff. I ain't had a drink in a week. Kind of slick, that; oily, you know; not made in a chemical factory."

"You are a drinking man?" It was half a question, half a challenge.

"No, ma'am, not to speak of. I HAVE rared up and ripsnorted at spells, but most unfrequent. But there is times when a good stiff jolt lands on the right spot kerchunk, and this is sure one of them. And now, thanking you for your kindness, ma'am, I'll just be a pulling along."

But Mrs. Setliffe did not want to lose her burglar. She was too poised a woman to possess much romance, but there was a thrill about the present situation that delighted her. Besides, she knew there was no danger. The man, despite his jaw and the steady brown eyes, was eminently tractable. Also, farther back in her consciousness glimmered the thought of an audience of admiring friends. It was too bad not to have that audience.

"You haven't explained how burglary, in your case, is merely collecting what is your own," she said. "Come, sit down, and tell me about it here at the table."

She maneuvered for her own seat, and placed him across the corner from her. His alertness had not deserted him, as she noted, and his

eyes roved sharply about, returning always with smoldering admiration to hers, but never resting long. And she noted likewise that while she spoke he was intent on listening for other sounds than those of her voice. Nor had he relinquished the revolver, which lay at the corner of the table between them, the butt close to his right hand.

But he was in a new habitat which he did not know. This man from the West, cunning in woodcraft and plainscraft, with eyes and ears open, tense and suspicious, did not know that under the table, close to her foot, was the push button of an electric bell. He had never heard of such a contrivance, and his keenness and wariness went for naught.

"It's like this, Miss," he began, in response to her urging. "Old Setliffe done me up in a little deal once. It was raw, but it worked. Anything will work full and legal when it's got few hundred million behind it. I'm not squealin', and I ain't taking a slam at your pa. He don't know me from Adam, and I reckon he don't know he done me outa anything. He's too big, thinking and dealing in millions, to ever hear of a small potato like me. He's an operator. He's got all kinds of experts thinking and planning and working for him, some of them, I hear, getting more cash salary than the President of the United States. I'm only one of thousands that have been done up by your pa, that's all.

"You see, ma'am, I had a little hole in the ground--a dinky, hydraulic, one-horse outfit of a mine. And when the Setliffe crowd shook down Idaho, and reorganized the smelter trust, and roped in the rest of the landscape, and put through the big hydraulic scheme at Twin Pines, why I sure got squeezed. I never had a run for my money. I was scratched off the card before the first heat. And so, to-night, being broke and my friend needing me bad, I just dropped around to make a raise outa your pa. Seeing as I needed it, it kinda was coming to me."

"Granting all that you say is so," she said, "nevertheless it does not make house-breaking any the less house-breaking. You couldn't make such a defense in a court of law."

"I know that," he confessed meekly. "What's right ain't always legal. And that's why I am so uncomfortable a-settin' here and talking with you. Not that I ain't enjoying your company--I sure do enjoy it--but I just can't afford to be caught. I know what they'd do to me in this here city. There was a young fellow that got fifty years only last week for holding a man up on the street for two dollars and eighty-five cents. I read about it in the paper. When times is hard and they ain't no work, men get desperate. And then the other men who've got

something to be robbed of get desperate, too, and they just sure soak it to the other fellows. If I got caught, I reckon I wouldn't get a mite less than ten years. That's why I'm hankering to be on my way."

"No; wait." She lifted a detaining hand, at the same time removing her foot from the bell, which she had been pressing intermittently. "You haven't told me your name yet."

He hesitated.

"Call me Dave."

"Then . . . Dave," she laughed with pretty confusion. "Something must be done for you. You are a young man, and you are just at the beginning of a bad start. If you begin by attempting to collect what you think is coming to you, later on you will be collecting what you are perfectly sure isn't coming to you. And you know what the end will be. Instead of this, we must find something honorable for you to do."

"I need the money, and I need it now," he replied doggedly. "It's not for myself, but for that friend I told you about. He's in a peck of trouble, and he's got to get his lift now or not at all."

"I can find you a position," she said quickly. "And--yes, the very thing!--I'll lend you the money you want to send to your friend. This you can pay back out of your salary."

"About three hundred would do," he said slowly. "Three hundred would pull him through. I'd work my fingers off for a year for that, and my keep, and a few cents to buy Bull Durham with."

"Ah! You smoke! I never thought of it."

Her hand went out over the revolver toward his hand, as she pointed to the tell-tale yellow stain on his fingers. At the same time her eyes measured the nearness of her own hand and of his to the weapon. She ached to grip it in one swift movement. She was sure she could do it, and yet she was not sure; and so it was that she refrained as she withdrew her hand.

"Won't you smoke?" she invited.

"I'm 'most dying to."

"Then do so. I don't mind. I really like it-cigarettes, I mean."

With his left band he dipped into his side pocket, brought out a loose wheat-straw paper and shifted it to his right hand close by the revolver. Again he dipped, transferring to the paper a pinch of brown, flaky tobacco. Then he proceeded, both hands just over the revolver, to roll the cigarette.

"From the way you hover close to that nasty weapon, you seem to be afraid of me," she challenged.

"Not exactly afraid of you, ma'am, but, under the circumstances, just a mite timid."

"But I've not been afraid of you."

"You've got nothing to lose."

"My life," she retorted.

"That's right," he acknowledged promptly, "and you ain't been scairt of me. Mebbe I am over anxious."

"I wouldn't cause you any harm."

Even as she spoke, her slipper felt for the bell and pressed it. At the same time her eyes were earnest with a plea of honesty.

"You are a judge of men. I know it. And of women. Surely, when I am trying to persuade you from a criminal life and to get you honest work to do . . . .?"

He was immediately contrite.

"I sure beg your pardon, ma'am," he said. "I reckon my nervousness ain't complimentary."

As he spoke, he drew his right hand from the table, and after lighting the cigarette, dropped it by his side.

"Thank you for your confidence," she breathed softly, resolutely keeping her eyes from measuring the distance to the revolver, and keeping her foot pressed firmly on the bell.

"About that three hundred," he began. "I can telegraph it West to-night. And I'll agree to work a year for it and my keep."

"You will earn more than that. I can promise seventy-five dollars a month at the least. Do you know horses?"

His face lighted up and his eyes sparkled.

"Then go to work for me--or for my father, rather, though I engage all the servants. I need a second coachman--"

"And wear a uniform?" he interrupted sharply, the sneer of the free-born West in his voice and on his lips.

She smiled tolerantly.

"Evidently that won't do. Let me think. Yes. Can you break and handle colts?"

He nodded.

"We have a stock farm, and there's room for just such a man as you. Will you take it?"

"Will I, ma'am?" His voice was rich with gratitude and enthusiasm. "Show me to it. I'll dig right in to-morrow. And I can sure promise you one thing, ma'am. You'll never be sorry for lending Hughie Luke a hand in his trouble--"

"I thought you said to call you Dave," she chided forgivingly.

"I did, ma'am. I did. And I sure beg your pardon. It was just plain bluff. My real name is Hughie Luke. And if you'll give me the address of that stock farm of yours, and the railroad fare, I head for it first thing in the morning."

Throughout the conversation she had never relaxed her attempts on the bell. She had pressed it in every alarming way--three shorts and a long, two and a long, and five. She had tried long series of shorts, and, once, she had held the button down for a solid three minutes. And she had been divided between objurgation of the stupid, heavy-sleeping butler and doubt if the bell were in order.

"I am so glad," she said; "so glad that you are willing. There won't be much to arrange. But you will first have to trust me while I go upstairs for my purse."

She saw the doubt flicker momentarily in his eyes, and added hastily, "But you see I am trusting you with the three hundred dollars."

"I believe you, ma'am," he came back gallantly. "Though I just can't help this nervousness."

"Shall I go and get it?"

But before she could receive consent, a slight muffled jar from the distance came to her ear. She knew it for the swing-door of the butler's pantry. But so slight was it--more a faint vibration than a sound--that she would not have heard had not her ears been keyed and listening for it. Yet the man had heard. He was startled in his composed way.

"What was that?" he demanded.

For answer, her left hand flashed out to the revolver and brought it back. She had had the start of him, and she needed it, for the next instant his hand leaped up from his side, clutching emptiness where the revolver had been.

"Sit down!" she commanded sharply, in a voice new to him. "Don't move. Keep your hands on the table."

She had taken a lesson from him. Instead of holding the heavy weapon extended, the butt of it and her forearm rested on the table, the muzzle pointed, not at his head, but his chest. And he, looking coolly and obeying her commands, knew there was no chance of the kick-up of the recoil producing a miss. Also, he saw that the revolver did not wabble, nor the hand shake, and he was thoroughly conversant with the size of hole the soft-nosed bullets could make. He had eyes, not for her, but for the hammer, which had risen under the pressure of her forefinger on the trigger.

"I reckon I'd best warn you that that there trigger-pull is filed dread-

ful fine. Don't press too hard, or I'll have a hole in me the size of a walnut."

She slacked the hammer partly down.

"That's better," he commented. "You'd best put it down all the way. You see how easy it works. If you want to, a quick light pull will jiffy her up and back and make a pretty mess all over your nice floor."

A door opened behind him, and he heard somebody enter the room. But he did not turn his head. He was looking at her, and he found the face of another woman--hard, cold, pitiless yet brilliant in its beauty. The eyes, too, were hard, though blazing with a cold light.

"Thomas," she commanded, "go to the telephone and call the police. Why were you so long in answering?"

"I came as soon as I heard the bell, madam," was the answer.

The robber never took his eyes from hers, nor did she from his, but at mention of the bell she noticed that his eyes were puzzled for the moment.

"Beg your pardon," said the butler from behind, "but wouldn't it be better for me to get a weapon and arouse the servants?"

"No; ring for the police. I can hold this man. Go and do it--quickly."

The butler slippered out of the room, and the man and the woman sat on, gazing into each other's eyes. To her it was an experience keen with enjoyment, and in her mind was the gossip of her crowd, and she saw notes in the society weeklies of the beautiful young Mrs. Setliffe capturing an armed robber single-handed. It would create a sensation, she was sure.

"When you get that sentence you mentioned," she said coldly, "you will have time to meditate upon what a fool you have been, taking other persons' property and threatening women with revolvers. You will have time to learn your lesson thoroughly. Now tell the truth. You haven't any friend in trouble. All that you told me was lies."

He did not reply. Though his eyes were upon her, they seemed blank. In truth, for the instant she was veiled to him, and what he saw was the wide sunwashed spaces of the West, where men and women were bigger than the rotten denizens, as he had encountered them, of the thrice rotten cities of the East.

"Go on. Why don't you speak? Why don't you lie some more? Why don't you beg to be let off?"

"I might," he answered, licking his dry lips. "I might ask to be let off if . . . "

"If what?" she demanded peremptorily, as he paused.

"I was trying to think of a word you reminded me of. As I was saying,

I might if you was a decent woman."

Her face paled.

"Be careful," she warned.

"You don't dast kill me," he sneered. "The world's a pretty low down place to have a thing like you prowling around in it, but it ain't so plumb low down, I reckon, as to let you put a hole in me. You're sure bad, but the trouble with you is that you're weak in your badness. It ain't much to kill a man, but you ain't got it in you. There's where you lose out."

"Be careful of what you say," she repeated. "Or else, I warn you, it will go hard with you. It can be seen to whether your sentence is light or heavy."

"Something's the matter with God," he remarked irrelevantly, "to be letting you around loose. It's clean beyond me what he's up to, playing such-like tricks on poor humanity. Now if I was God--"

His further opinion was interrupted by the entrance of the butler.

"Something is wrong with the telephone, madam," he announced. "The wires are crossed or something, because I can't get Central."

"Go and call one of the servants," she ordered. "Send him out for an officer, and then return here."

Again the pair was left alone.

"Will you kindly answer one question, ma'am?" the man said. "That servant fellow said something about a bell. I watched you like a cat, and you sure rung no bell."

"It was under the table, you poor fool. I pressed it with my foot."

"Thank you, ma'am. I reckoned I'd seen your kind before, and now I sure know I have. I spoke to you true and trusting, and all the time you was lying like hell to me."

She laughed mockingly.

"Go on. Say what you wish. It is very interesting."

"You made eyes at me, looking soft and kind, playing up all the time the fact that you wore skirts instead of pants--and all the time with your foot on the bell under the table. Well, there's some consolation. I'd sooner be poor Hughie Luke, doing his ten years, than be in your skin. Ma'am, hell is full of women like you."

There was silence for a space, in which the man, never taking his eyes from her, studying her, was making up his mind.

"Go on," she urged. "Say something."

"Yes, ma'am, I'll say something. I'll sure say something. Do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to get right up from this chair and walk out that door. I'd take the gun from you, only you might turn

foolish and let it go off. You can have the gun. It's a good one. As I was saying, I am going right out that door. And you ain't going to pull that gun off either. It takes guts to shoot a man, and you sure ain't got them. Now get ready and see if you can pull that trigger. I ain't going to harm you. I'm going out that door, and I'm starting."

Keeping his eyes fixed on her, he pushed back the chair and slowly stood erect. The hammer rose halfway. She watched it. So did he.

"Pull harder," he advised. "It ain't half up yet. Go on and pull it and kill a man. That's what I said, kill a man, spatter his brains out on the floor, or slap a hole into him the size of your fist. That's what killing a man means."

The hammer lowered jerkily but gently. The man turned his back and walked slowly to the door. She swung the revolver around so that it bore on his back. Twice again the hammer came up halfway and was reluctantly eased down.

At the door the man turned for a moment before passing on. A sneer was on his lips. He spoke to her in a low voice, almost drawling, but in it was the quintessence of all loathing, as he called her a name unspeakable and vile.

Glossary

dim, adj – dim light is not bright
smother,v- to cover smth. completely
lace, n – light delicate cloth with patterns of small holes in it
swear, v (swore, sworn) – to make a sincere statement that you are telling the truth
prowl, v - to move around an area in a quiet way, especially because you intend to do smth. bad
notorious, adj –famous for smth. bad
wabble, n (variant of wobble) – a slight movement from side to side
shebang, n (informal) – all the different parts or aspects of a situation
vamoose, v (slang) – to leave hurriedly(Spanish vamos, 'let's go)
snoop, v – to secretly try to get information that someone would not want you to have
shorthorn, n – one of a breed of beef or dairy cattle having short, curved horns
ornery, adj – AmE (humorous) quick to argue or become annoyed with people
baffle, v - if a problem baffles you, you cannot understand it or solve it

choke, v – to squeeze someone's neck so they cannot breathe
tackle, v – to make an attempt to deal with the problem
awe, v – to feel great respect, admiration and sometimes fear for something
alert, adj – paying attention to what is happening and ready to react quickly if necessary
alertness, n
rove, v – if your eyes rove around a place, you look all around it
butt, n – the end of the handle of a gun or tool
contrivance, n – a machine or piece of equipment
wary, adj – careful or nervous about someone or something
wariness, n
tentative, adj – 1) not definite or not certain 2) not confident
melting, adj – making you feel love or sympathy
spell, n – a short , indefinite period of time
jolt, n – a sudden strong feeling that does not last long
poised, adj- behaving in a controlled and relaxed way
tractable, adj (very formal) – easy to deal with
contrite, adj – very sorry or ashamed
sneer, n – an unpleasant smile or comment that shows you do not respect someone or smth.
bluff, n – an attempt to give a false idea to someone about the facts or situation
consent, n – permission to do something
muzzle, n – the end of a gun barrel where the bullets come out
hammer, n – the part of a gun that pushes against the bullet to make the explosion when you pull the trigger with your finger
sentence, n – a punishment given by a judge
denizen, n – someone who lives in a particular place
guts, n – the quality of being brave and determined
vile, adj – shocking and morally bad

Language Focus

1. Find English equivalents for the following word combinations and phrases in the text:

голубые глаза, изменчивые, как хамелеон; известный своей привычкой рано ложиться спать; небрежно одетый и темный от загара; револьвер не дрожал; я пришел разнюхать, чем можно поживиться; не будь я новичком в этом деле; мой друг в беде; придушить, не причинив особой боли; я впервые взялся за такое дело;

она преградила ему путь; вы не из тех, кто может обидеть женщину; вы безусловно храбры; я ноги исходил; с почти материнской заботливостью; временами я изрядно выпивал; удивительно послушен; настороженность не покидала его; он никогда не слышал о таком устройстве; его бдительность и осторожность были бессильны; старик разорил меня; такая мелкая сошка как я; маленькое предприятие с гидравлической установкой в одну
лошадиную силу; завладели всеми земельными участками; я, конечно, прогорел; немного пообчистить вашего папашу; все же грабеж остается грабежом; не послужило бы оправданием в суде; меньше, чем десятью годами мне не отделаться; характерные желтые пятна; ей страстно хотелось схватить револьвер одним быстрым движением; моя подозрительность не делает мне чести; объезжать жеребцов; племенная ферма; я просто соврал; касаясь пустого места, где раньше был пистолет; хорошо представляя себе размеры дыры, которую оставляют пули с мягким кончиком; она уже видела заметки в светской хронике; посягнув на чужое имущество; наш мир – прегнусное место, если в нем разгуливают люди вроде вас; будет ли приговор мягким или суровым; я открыл вам душу; таким женщинам место в аду; произнес отвратительное ругательство.

2. Match the words with their synonyms.

1. incredulity	a. watchful
2. contrivance	b. unwilling
3. patent	c. permission
4. loathing	d. twisted
5. tractable	e. obstruction
6. alert	f. obvious
7. poise	g. disgust
8. consent	h. gadget
9. wry	i. docile
10. obstacle	j. disbelief
11. reluctant	k. self-control

3. Reproduce the situations in which the following phrases are used.

to disturb the atmosphere; to be notorious for smth.; to choke smb.; a very beautiful obstacle; to harm a woman; eminently tractable; an audience of admiring friends; to be in a new habitat; to trust smb. with smth.; the size of a walnut; to capture an armed robber; to pull the trigger.

Reading Comprehension

1. Who or what do the underlined words refer to?

1. He was notorious for going to bed early.
2. Suppose I made an outcry for help?
3. I can't afford to go to jail.
4. Nobody will disturb us.
5. What's the matter? Don't you like it ?
6. Something must be done for you.
7. I came as soon as I heard the bell, madam.
8. He's got all kinds of experts thinking and planning and working for him.
9. It was under the table, you poor fool. I pressed it with my foot.
10. He's too big, thinking and dealing in millions.

2. Which adjectives describe : a) Mrs Setliffe b) the robber ?

medium-sized beautiful swarthy keen slender soft decent-looking poised alert tractable wary tense pitiless suspicious cunning vile trusting rotten

3. Are the following sentences true or false?

1. Hughie Luke was a typical criminal.
2. There was nobody at home when he broke into the house of Mr Setliffe.
3. Mrs Setliffe felt that from such a man there was little to fear.
4. She was a very kind and sympathetic woman and she decided to help the robber.
5. The burglar was patently awed by her soft womanhood.
6. Mrs Setliffe wanted the robber to go away as quickly as possible.
7. She managed to press on an electric bell and to awake her butler.
8. The butler was not able to call the police because something was wrong with the telephone.

4. Explain the meaning of the following sentences.

1. He had never heard of such a contrivance, and his keenness and wariness went for naught.
2. What's right ain't always legal.
3. Anything will work full and legal when it's got few hundred million behind it.
4. When times is hard and they ain't no work, men get desperate.
5. I was scratched off the card before the first heat.
6. He's in a peck of trouble and he's got to get his lift now or not at all.
7. I'd sooner be poor Hughie Luke, doing his ten years, than be in your skin.

5. Answer the following questions.

1. Where does the story take place?
2. When did Hughie Luke break into the house of Mr Setliffe? What kind of weapon did he have with him?
3. Was he a typical criminal? How did he explain his breaking into the house?
4. Why did he want to leave the house as quickly as possible?
5. Mrs Setliffe did not want to lose her burglar, did she? Why? How can you explain her behaviour?
6. What feelings did Mrs Setliffe arouse in him? How did she manage to convince him that she was just a soft and kind woman who wanted to help him?
7. What did the robber tell Mrs Setliffe about himself and about his friend who got into trouble?
8. How did her behaviour change after she managed to grip the revolver?
9. What happened at the end of the story?

Talking points

1. There are two main characters in the story. Who of them do you like more? Why? Give a character sketch of a) Hughie Luke b) Mrs Setliffe.
2. While describing the appearance of Mrs Setliffe the author writes that she has ' blue eyes of the chameleon sort'. Is the word 'chameleon' important not only for her appearance but for describing her character and behaviour as well? Find all the places in the story where Mrs Setliffe demonstrates the behaviour of a real chameleon.
Have you met such people in your life? What do you think of the people who change their opinions, ideas or behaviour to fit any situation?

3. The words 'decent' and 'rotten' are used by the author several times. In your opinion, who is decent and who is rotten in the story?
Can decent people become criminals? In what situations? Can you give any examples from books, films, etc. ?
4. Imagine that Luke Hughie was caught by the police and you are to defend him in a court of law. What mitigating circumstances would you find to explain his crime and make it seem less bad?
5. Do you like the ending of the story? Would you like to change it ? In what way?

Writing

Write a short summary of the story.
Write a new ending for the story.

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